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SOME ACCOUNT

OF THE

LIFE AND OPINIONS

OF

CHARLES,

SECOND EARL GREY.

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BY LIEUT.-GENERAL HON. C. GREY.

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PREFACE

THE following Memoir was written for the most part upwards of ten years ago. The Continent of Europe was then scarcely recovering from the convulsions of 1848-49. England had almost alone weathered the storm; a safety which, I think, she owed mainly to the sound principles of Government inaugurated by the Whig Ministry of 1830, and afterwards necessarily adhered to by succeeding Administrations, of whatever party denomination.

The passing of the Reform Act had indeed rendered Government on any other principles impracticable; and in this fact we find the defence and justification of that measure, as well as the object of its authors. Certainly, at all events, this was the sole object of my father as the leader of the Reform movement, to insure the future conduct of the Government

on sound and constitutional principles, not, as has been sometimes asserted, to perpetuate the tenure of office in his own party.

The present volume, however, will stop far short of the time when Reform principles achieved their final triumph; but I shall often have to allude to that time, and to the results that have followed the policy then adopted, as affording a fair subject for comparison with the period of which I am now to speak, when a widely different system of Government was still in the ascendant.

I do not propose at present to bring down the notice of my father's public life beyond 1817, when the alliance which for upwards of eleven years had subsisted between the Whigs and Grenvillites was finally dissolved; nor even as regards that period do I intend to enter into anything like a detailed or connected narrative of events, which are matter of history, and with which I shall suppose my readers to be more or less acquainted—further, that is, than may be necessary to illustrate my father's political opinions and principles of action. I shall take the expression of these opinions and principles as much as possible from his own words, either written in familiar correspondence with his family and friends, or spoken by him in his place in Parliament. My object will be—if I cannot persuade the world on all occasions, as I am

myself persuaded, of the general soundness of his views—at least to endeavour to impart somewhat of my own conviction of the singularly straightforward, disinterested, and high-minded motives which ever guided his public conduct.

I make use of the appellations 'Whig' and 'Tory' as they applied to the parties as they stood opposed to each other at the time of which I write; by no means as they are now assumed by parties and individuals who have no earthly claim to be characterized as either one or the other. In fact, since the settlement of all the great questions formerly dividing men on somewhat higher grounds than those of mere personal pretensions and individual rivalry, these names have lost all significance. From the time that the Reform Act was finally accepted by the Conservative party, and that Sir Robert Peel issued his famous Tamworth manifesto in 1834—(every word of which, my father said at the time, he might himself have written)—there has indeed been no difference between public men as to the principles on which the Government of the country should be conducted; and the retention of the old party names serves no other end, to my way of thinking, but that most mischievous one, of keeping apart those, who, differing on no one principle of national policy, might act together to the great advantage of the State, but for the accident which has

thrown them to this or that side of either House of Parliament.

The Whigs (so called) of the present day have little in common with the men who, like my father, were ever the unflinching advocates of a due balance of the powers conferred by the Constitution on the different estates of the realm; who upheld the just prerogatives of the Crown, and at the same time asserted the privileges of Parliament, and contended for the rights and liberties of the people; who, if they were still foremost to resist the undue influence of the Court and the corrupt system of Government to which it led,—if they opposed the harsh and arbitrary measures of the Cabinet or the uncalled for (as they deemed it) suspension of the safeguards of our free Constitution,—were yet as forward to resist any unconstitutional extension of the democratic principle, and that constant 'pressure from without'* to which everything would appear now to be conceded. 'I 'should be anxious,' my father writes to Lord Grenville, on the state of parties in 1809, 'to mark equally 'the line of distinction between us and the Ministers 'on the one hand, and those who are urging these 'popular questions in such pernicious modes on the 'other.'

* This expression, which is now so universally adopted, was first used by my father in 1834, in answer to Lord Ebrington, who forwarded a letter to him, signed by numerous members of the House of Commons, praying that he would reconsider his determination to resign.

The Tory of the present day—I mean the man, if such there be, who still assumes the name—would be almost surprised to be told that the distinguishing characteristic of his party in former times was that of the most uncompromising hostility to any approach towards civil or religious liberty: coercion with its most stringent and oppressive enactments in the one case; intolerance in its most bigoted form in the other.

It is unnecessary for me to enter into the reasons which have hitherto delayed the publication of this Memoir. I regret that delay, unavoidable as it has been, for fresh generations have sprung up, or are fast springing up around us, belonging to which, I fear, there are few who have much knowledge of, and still fewer who take any interest in, these bygone times. While of those who took any part in the events of those days, who had either already entered, or were about to enter, upon the political stage,—

> 'How few, all weak and wither'd in their force,
> Wait on the verge of dark Eternity,
> Like stranded wrecks, the tide returning hoarse
> To sweep them from our sight!—Time runs his ceaseless course.'

On one account, indeed, I am not sorry for the delay. During the period that has elapsed since I compiled this volume, many valuable additions have been made to the history of these times, and there are now few eminent statesmen amongst my father's con-

temporaries whose memoirs, diaries, or correspondence have not been given to the world by their surviving friends and relatives. But even in such of these publications as give an exclusively Tory view of the events of the day, I have found nothing to render necessary any material change in what I had written. I deal, as I have said, with opinions and principles rather than with facts; and even where I discuss the latter, as in the case of the dismissal of the Grenville Administration in 1807, or the negotiations for changes of Government in 1809–11 and 12, I find no reason to alter the impressions I had already formed and expressed. I have merely added passages or notes from time to time, as I have read these works, either to mark some confirmation of my own views, or to correct what appears to me to be a misstatement or a misapprehension on the part of others. I must here add, that for all such views and opinions as I may express in the course of this volume, more especially whenever I compare the times to which it relates with those that have followed, I am entirely and solely responsible.

I have not attempted to give any account of my father in private life further than the short summary that will be found in a supplementary chapter at the end of the volume, simply because I found it utterly impossible, by any description in words, to give

an adequate idea to those who did not know him of all that he was in his family. I have, however, inserted in that chapter extracts from his letters to my mother, which will abundantly confirm what I elsewhere incidentally allude to—his fondness for his home, and his distaste for the turmoil of politics. Even these are insufficient, indeed, to make him thoroughly known as I should wish the world to know him, and as he *was* known to his family, in all the beauty of his character; his noble and generous nature, the indulgent kindliness of his disposition, his tender affectionate heart!

Of the manner in which I have discharged the task I have set myself I need say nothing; of this it is for others to judge. I do not pretend to an impartiality which I should be ashamed of feeling—and indeed I have before me the example of others to warn me from any such profession*—lest while reading others a lecture on the duty of such a quality in a biographer, every line I write should be in contradiction to my own precepts.

I am well aware how far my execution of the work falls short of what I could wish it to be, and of what, considering the subject, it *ought* to be; but I shall

* See the editorial remarks on the 'Diaries and Correspondence of the Right Honourable George Rose,' *passim*.

cheerfully submit to any criticism, whatever its nature, which may affect myself, if I shall have helped the public in any degree to a better appreciation of him, whom I believe from my heart to have been one of the most enlightened statesmen, certainly one of the honestest and most disinterested politicians of this or any other age.

> Incorrupta fides, nudaque veritas—
> Quando ullum invenient Parem !

April, 1861.

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SOME ACCOUNT OF

THE LIFE AND OPINIONS

OF

EARL GREY.

CHAPTER I.

FROM FIRST ENTRANCE INTO PUBLIC LIFE TO TERMINATION OF MR. PITT'S FIRST ADMINISTRATION—1786 TO 1801.

MY father, the eldest surviving son of General Sir Charles, afterwards Earl Grey, was born at Fallodon, the seat of his father, in Northumberland, on the 13th of March 1764; and at the early age of six years was sent to a preparatory school in Marylebone.

At this school, of which, in after life, he always spoke with the utmost horror, he remained for three years, and then completed his education in the usual course at Eton and Cambridge.

That he was considered to have distinguished himself at Eton we may assume from the fact of his having been asked to contribute the Latin verses composed by him at that school, to a publication which ap-

peared in 1795, under the title of the 'Musæ Etonenses;'—and at Cambridge he obtained more than one prize for English composition and declamation. But he never had himself a good opinion of the system of education pursued either at Eton or the University at that time; and used to say that almost all he knew he had acquired for himself after leaving College.

On quitting Cambridge, and not being yet of age when the general election took place in 1784, he passed some time on the Continent, travelling through the south of France, Italy, and part of Germany, in the suite of Henry Duke of Cumberland.

A vacancy, however, having occurred two years afterwards in the representation of Northumberland, he was returned, in July 1786, at the age of twenty-two, for his native county. This seat he held for twenty-one years; until the dissolution of Parliament following the dismissal of the ministry of which he had formed a part; in 1807; when being unexpectedly threatened with a contest, which the 'No Popery' cry, got up against the members of that Government, made it difficult for him to support—at all events without an expense that, in his position, expecting almost daily to be called to the House of Lords by the death of his father, it would have been madness in him to incur—he declined presenting himself for re-election.

He made his maiden speech in the House of Commons in opposition to the address moved by Mr. Black-

burne to thank his Majesty for the Commercial Treaty with France, negotiated by Mr. Pitt; expressing a distrust of the French Government, which was at least greatly modified in after years, when, as first Minister of the Crown, he studiously and successfully cultivated the most friendly relations between the two countries. It may also be objected to that speech that the opinions it avows are inconsistent with the now recognised principles of sound political economy. But questions of finance and commerce were never much to his taste, and the opinions he then professed were those very generally entertained at the time by men supposed to be most conversant with such subjects. Be this, however, as it may, the effect of that speech was at once to place him, young as he was, in the foremost rank, amongst the orators of an assembly rendered illustrious by the names of Fox, Pitt, Burke, Sheridan, &c.

Mr. Addington (afterwards Speaker) thus describes my father's first appearance:—

'We had a glorious debate last night upon the 'motion for an address of thanks to the King for 'having negotiated the Commercial Treaty, &c. . . A 'new speaker presented himself to the House, and 'went though his first performance with an éclat 'which has not been equalled within my recollection. 'His name is Grey. He is not more than twenty-'two years of age; and he took his seat (for North-'umberland) only in the present session. I do not

'go too far in declaring that in the advantage of 'figure, voice, elocution, and manner, he is not sur- 'passed by any member of the House; and I grieve 'to say that he was last night in the ranks of Opposi- 'tion, from whence there is no chance of his being 'detached.'*

In this belief Mr. Addington was fully borne out by the event; for though, even some months after, Mr. Fox declared in the course of debate that he 'did not '*yet* consider Mr. Grey as a party man,' (expressing, however, his hope that he would soon become so,) my father does not appear himself to have hesitated for a moment as to his future course. He attached himself at once to that eminent man and the party of which he was the chief, as the exponents of those great principles of well-regulated and constitutional liberty, from his allegiance to which he never, in the course of a long public career, swerved for a single instant.

Devoting himself to the support of these principles with all the eagerness and energy of a thorough conviction, and of an ardent and generous nature, he may, in after years, have felt reason to regret that he had at times been hurried by his anxiety to promote them into participation in measures, or into the adoption of language, of which his maturer judgment disapproved; but it is given to few public men to be able to look

* Letter from Mr. Addington to his father, published in his Memoirs.

back upon a political career extending over half a century, with the satisfaction of feeling that the principles to the support of which he had dedicated himself at its commencement, had not only been consistently adhered to by him throughout with an ever-increasing conviction of their soundness, but that their truth had been ultimately admitted by his very adversaries; and that they had finally been adopted by the nation at large, as those alone on which any future Government could be constituted.

At no period of his life, however, could my father be justly considered as a mere party man. With the highest sense of the duties of men professing to belong to the same party towards each other, and of the necessity for the exercise of that forbearance and moderation in urging individual opinions without which he thought no body of independent members could be kept together for any useful or practical purpose, he never came to the consideration of any great question with a mind narrowed to mere party views;—that is to say, he was always far above adopting any line of conduct with a view to mere party advantage, if not satisfied, at the same time, that it was such as the true interests of the country demanded. It has been well and truly remarked of him, 'that 'instead of lessening himself to the stature of a 'mere Whig, he would raise Whiggism to his own level.'*

* Notice of Lord Grey's Life in *Monthly Chronicle*.

The immediate effect of his first speech, was, as has been already mentioned, to rank him amongst the foremost men in the House of Commons; and he was shortly afterwards named one of the managers charged with conducting the impeachment of Warren Hastings; in which capacity he was intrusted with the introduction, in Westminster Hall, of the charge relating to the treatment of Cheyt Singh.

From this time till the dissolution of Mr. Pitt's first Administration in 1801, he was in constant and active Opposition. On the question of peace or war in the then state of the Continent, and on those affecting the domestic government of the country, he was at all times diametrically opposed to that Minister.

During this period, as is well known, the revolutionary fever in France, with all its attendant horrors, was at its height;—exciting in its commencement, and during its progress, hope or alarm in England, according to the particular bias of men's minds. While, on the one hand, encouraged and led by the example of France, many Societies sprang up in England, asserting the wildest doctrines of the day,—as furious and unreasoning a cry was raised, on the other, for the adoption of the most violent and unconstitutional measures of coercion and repression;—a cry that was unfortunately only too successful, as the measures which were consequently adopted were only followed by the usual result of such a policy;

that, namely, of aggravating the mischief it was intended to abate.

If my father, not sharing in the anti-revolutionary fever which prevailed amongst the adherents of Government, extending even to many of the leading Whigs, denounced in strong language the course upon which Ministers now entered; if he even sympathised in the earlier efforts of the French people to amend the system of Government that had so long oppressed them; no one, not the most violent of the alarmists, not Mr. Burke himself, could condemn more strongly than he did the subsequent proceedings of the revolutionary party in France. 'There was no man,' he said, in the course of the discussions to which the events in France gave rise, 'who abhorred more than he did 'their present Government. He thought the Govern-'ment of France was what it had been called by a 'right honourable friend of his (Mr. Fox), a furious 'and a rigid tyranny. Furious and rigid it certainly 'was, and the last form of Government under which 'he would wish to live. He had rather live under 'Caligula or Nero, than under the present Govern-'ment of France.' And having, on a subsequent occasion, been reminded of these words, he repeated: 'He was much obliged to the honourable gentleman 'who had done him the honour to remember his words. 'He had declared, and he would declare again, that 'he would rather live under the most despotic mo-'narchy, nay even under the rule of the King of

'Prussia, or the Empress of Russia, than under the 'present Government of France.'

In disapproving, therefore, entirely of the domestic policy adopted by the Government under the circumstances of the time, it was not that he sympathized in any degree with those by whom the Societies above alluded to were formed. On the contrary, no man could disapprove of their proceedings more strongly than he did. He was at all times opposed to any extreme democratic changes in the constitution, and many years later, in writing to Lord Holland on the subject of those who advocated such changes, he says, 'I was opposed to these men in 1792, and I am op-'posed to them now.' We accordingly find, throughout his political career, that the Radical Party, even while supporting his measures, evinced a strong spirit of hostility to himself. And when he at length formed the Administration by which his early principles were carried into effect, the question of Parliamentary Reform was no sooner settled than they became the most inveterate and persevering opponents of his Government.

But he believed that the true way to meet and frus-

* The extracts given in the course of this Memoir from my father's speeches, are all taken from the published Reports in Hansard. Nothing could in general be more unsatisfactory than the manner in which reporting was conducted at this period, and it is sometimes difficult even to catch the meaning of what is given as a speech in Parliament. Nor was my father in the habit, like many Members, of sending a corrected copy of his speeches as he spoke them, or intended to speak them.

trate the designs of such men, and to give real strength to the Government, and to the institutions of the country,—was by the removal of glaring and acknowledged abuses; and if,—after the famous quarrel in the House of Commons between Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke, ending in their final political separation, and in the secession from the party of the alarmist Whigs,—if my father then attached himself more zealously than ever to Mr. Fox,—if he even went beyond that statesman in his assertion of popular principles of Government, and in the steps which he took to support them, —it may be fearlessly asserted that it was strictly in a spirit—to use the expression he himself adopted many years later in speaking of the principle on which he had proposed the Reform Bill of 1831—a spirit '*conservative* of the constitution.'

It was entirely in this spirit that he now joined with other leading members of the Whig party in what was named the 'Society of the Friends of the People;' a Society formed, not for the purpose of themselves advocating revolutionary doctrines, but for that of supporting those constitutional reforms and changes which were needed for the removal of acknowledged anomalies and abuses in our institutions, and which, if effected, they believed would afford the best security to the country against the designs of those who aimed at the subversion of the institutions themselves.

The following leading members of the Whig party were associated with him in this Society:—

Lords Lauderdale, Dacre, Kinnaird, Lord John Russell (the late Duke of Bedford), Hon. Thomas Maitland, Hon. Thomas (afterwards Lord) Erskine, Sir Philip Francis, Sir R. Throckmorton, Messrs. Sheridan, Whitbread, Lambton, Dudley North, Curwen, Tierney, Piggott (afterwards Solicitor-General), Leach (afterwards Vice-Chancellor of England), Rogers (the poet), Mackintosh, George Byng, &c.

Mr. Fox, though not joining it himself, does not appear to have discouraged its formation. On the contrary, in writing to his nephew Lord Holland in 1795, he would seem to give a complete justification of it: 'But among all the dangers,' he says, 'of 'which we have the option, I have no doubt that the 'right part of a man who means well to the country 'is to endeavour to rouse the people, before it becomes 'too late, to act by other means than those of force, by '*giving them leaders who mean well, to direct their efforts* '*to such remedies to the present evils as are least likely to* '*create confusion.*'

Lord John Russell, in the 2nd vol. of his 'Life of Fox,' p. 281, says, indeed, that Mr. Fox disapproved of the formation of this Society, and that my father joined it without consulting him. Still I found what I say, as to Mr. Fox not *discouraging* its formation, on what my father himself told me. During his last illness, when no longer able to walk, he used to be wheeled about the house in a chair, and on one occasion, when stopping, as he often did, before Mr. Fox's

bust, and speaking of the influence he had held over him, he added, 'Yet he did not always use it as he 'might have done—one word from him would have 'kept me out of all the mess of the "Friends of the 'People," but he never spoke it.' When I remarked that, considering he only advocated as one of that Society the principles to which he had given effect as Minister, this was hardly to be regretted, he replied, 'that might be true, but there were men joined with 'them in that Society, whose views, though he did not 'know it at the time, were widely different from his 'own, and with whom it was not safe to have any 'communication.' On mentioning this conversation to the late Lord Dacre, he told me he remembered Mr. Fox used always to say he did not like to discourage the young ones.

My object, however, is less to discuss the prudence or imprudence of the step, than to show the truly honest and patriotic motives which alone influenced my father in taking it. For this purpose I need only quote the following explanation which he himself gave of the principles and objects of the Association:—

'The fact was that observing an opinion was rising 'in the country that was likely to lead to danger if 'means to prevent it were not taken in time, a set of 'gentlemen, of whom he had the honour to be one, had 'thought the best possible means of preventing mis-'chief was to look into the constitution, and to suggest 'the correction of such abuses as might be found to

'exist in its practice, in order to take from its enemies the only great ground for their clamour, that 'the constitution was beautiful in theory, but corrupt 'in practice. . . Far was he or any gentlemen of the 'Association from meaning to do anything that could 'trench upon the constitution. Their object was to 'preserve and maintain it—an object for which he 'was willing to sacrifice everything that was most 'dear to him.'*

The petition adopted by this Society, and presented to the House of Commons by Mr. Grey, will be found at length in the Parliamentary history. Truths, now long acknowledged to be such, are there stated in plain and strong language; but only party prejudice can characterize the documents, as Mr. Adolphus does in his history, as a 'manifesto in which terms of 'extreme contumely were feebly disguised by a flimsy 'veil of irony.'

It was as a member of this Association, and in support of the views thus temperately and constitutionally declared, that my father now took up that question with the success of which, forty years later, his name must ever be identified. And it was under somewhat similar circumstances, a revolution having again overturned the Government in France, that he ultimately, as first Minister of the Crown, proposed and carried a measure of Parliamentary Reform, in

* See page 247 for the declaration of principles issued by the Society, and quoted by my father in a speech in the House of Lords in 1810.

its main features and provisions, almost identical in principle with that which he now brought forward as a member of the 'Society of the Friends of the People.'

I must here explain, at the risk, perhaps, of being thought unduly to anticipate the history of later times, what I mean by saying that my father's name must ever be identified with the success of the Reform question. It is not that I wish to claim for him any *exclusive* merit in ultimately procuring that success, or to assert any pretensions on his part to be considered the sole author of the measure which became law in 1832. The cause doubtless owes much to the perseverance and ability of others, who supported it under adverse circumstances with unflinching energy and zeal; and to the able assistance of those who were united with him in the Government by which it was at last effected. Above all, a large share of credit belongs to Lord Althorp, who undertook the management of the Bill in Committee in the House of Commons, and who met the persevering and elaborate objections made to every detail with a patience and industry that were beyond all praise. He had to undergo the labour of making himself master of all the facts and statistical minutiæ on which the Bill was founded, and to fight it through a Committee which lasted longer than any upon record; and this in addition to all the work of his own heavy department.

But admitting the claims of others to the fullest extent, I can by no means acquiesce in the justice of

entirely setting my father aside, when the question of Reform is talked of, in order to give the whole credit of the triumph that was then achieved, to younger reformers, who played, after all, but a subordinate part in the final struggle. We have Lord John Russell's own admission, on introducing the Bill on the 1st of March 1831, that my father laid down the principles on which the measure was to be founded, the details of which were worked out by other members of the Government. 'Although,' he said, 'I cannot 'pretend to be the author of the measure, neither can 'I say that I have been kept in ignorance of its 'nature. The measure itself, *after the noble Lord who 'is at the head of the Government had formed it in his 'own mind, and communicated it to his colleagues*, was 'communicated to me, &c. . . . Sir, I regret that the 'noble Lord cannot by the law and usage of Parliament be permitted to explain his measure to the 'House, in his own clear and intelligible language; 'but as that is impossible, I trust the House will 'favour me with its indulgence, &c.'

And the fight once begun, it was to my father, above all others,—to the skill and courage with which he conducted it,—that the victory was due. Without the firmness and, strange as it may sound in Tory ears, the *moderation* he displayed in carrying the measure through Parliament; had he yielded on one side, to the attempts of the Opposition to impair the efficiency of the measure; or, on the other, had he allowed him-

self to be driven by the clamour of the liberal press, and of the more eager of the party, into a premature and unnecessary exercise of the power conceded to him by the King of creating peers; the question would, in all probability, either not have been settled at all in 1832, and in 1848 we might, like the rest of Europe, have had to deplore the evils and miseries of a state of revolution,—or it would have been settled only after a social struggle which would have placed the very existence of the Empire in jeopardy, and would have proved assuredly fatal to all well-regulated and constitutional liberty.

As an instance of the pressure, to which I have alluded above, put upon him when the success of the Reform Bill seemed doubtful in 1832, I must here quote a letter from the late Mr. Sydney Smith, written to my mother during the crisis:—

'I am alarmed for Lord Grey. So are many 'others. Is there a strong probability, amounting 'almost to a certainty, that the Bill will be carried 'without a creation of Peers? No. Then make them. 'But the King *will not*. Then resign. But if the King '*will* create, we shall lose more than we gain. I doubt 'it. Many threaten who will not vote against the 'Bill. . . There is not a moment to lose. The charac-'ter of Lord Grey is a valuable public possession. 'Lord Grey must say to his colleagues to-morrow: '"Brothers, the time draws near; you must choose 'this day between good and evil." . . . "I am sure the

'Bill will not pass without a creation; it *may* pass 'with one. It is the only expedient for doing what 'from the bottom of my heart I believe the country 'requires. I *will* create, and create immediately, or 'resign." . . . If you wish to be happy three months 'hence, create Peers. If you wish to avoid an old 'age of sorrow and reproach, create Peers. If you 'wish to retain my friendship—it is of no sort of con-'sequence whether you create Peers or not; I shall 'always retain for you the most sincere gratitude and 'affection, without the slightest reference to your poli-'tical wisdom or your political errors; and may God 'bless and support you in one of the most difficult 'moments that ever occurred to any public man.'

The following note is added by my mother to the above letter:—'Many of Lord Grey's friends, as re-'presented by Mr. S. Smith, concurred in the opinions 'expressed in this letter, and the whole of the liberal 'press, the "Times" in particular, urged the neces-'sity of creating Peers with alarming violence, and 'did not scruple to assert, that even the life of an old 'and timid man should be sacrificed for the good of 'the country! And had the Bill been again thrown 'out, there is every probability that Lord Grey would 'have run considerable risk. Fully aware of this fact, 'it was therefore an act of no inconsiderable courage 'to resist the entreaties of his friends and the opinion 'of the public; but the event justified the wisdom of 'his decision. Sincerely determined to carry the Bill

'if possible, he felt that his best chance of success was 'in resisting the clamours of his party, and the dan- 'gerous method proposed for meeting the difficulty.'

But it is time to return from a digression into which the natural desire to vindicate my father's right to a share at least of the credit attaching to the Reform victory of 1832 has led me.

The success which has attended that measure—strongly marked as it has been by the position maintained by England when not only France, but the whole Continent of Europe was again convulsed by revolution in the year 1848—is the best answer that can be given to the objection, successfuly urged in 1792, against the policy recommended by the Whigs, viz.: that the time was not fit for the consideration of such questions.

In giving notice on the 30th of April 1792, 'that 'he should, in the course of next session, have the 'honour of submitting to the consideration of the 'House, a motion, the object of which was a Reform 'in the representation of the people,'—my father proceeded to say that, 'Abuses had been permitted to 'creep into the constitution through neglect, or had 'been introduced into it through corruption, and those 'abuses were of a nature so dangerous that they 'threatened the very existence of the constitution 'itself.' . . 'The times were critical, and the minds of 'the people agitated. It was to do away every cause 'of complaint, and to preserve the peace of the public

'and the general tranquillity, that he wished a Reform 'to take place in the representation. In his mind it 'was a point of the utmost importance that the House 'should enjoy the good opinion of the public, and 'possess their confidence as a true representation of 'the people. . . The loss of that character might 'produce all the miseries of civil commotion, with 'which God forbid this nation should ever be afflicted. 'If there were those who wished to promote confusion 'and excite mischief he exceedingly regretted it. He 'disclaimed all connection with such persons, and 'must ever reprobate their conduct. He was con-'vinced, however, that the evils which threatened the 'constitution could only be corrected by a timely 'and temperate Reform; and, in his mind, the measure 'demanded the serious consideration of every friend 'of his country, and would be found deserving of his 'support.'

Such was the moderate and constitutional language in which my father, as the organ in Parliament of the Society of the Friends of the People, then advocated the necessity of this great measure, and in a similar tone of moderation (a tone from which he at no time departed), he corresponded with such of the provincial associations in connection with the Society in London, as applied to him for advice. Of this the following letter to the Secretary of the Society formed at Norwich, may be taken as an example:—

'SIR,

'I HAVE been favoured with your letter, together with one for the Society of the "Friends of the People," which I have sent to London to be laid before the Committee. . . . You are pleased to desire my instructions as to what is proper to be done. The best I can give you are contained in the different publications of the "Friends of the People," which I have desired to be sent to you, and which contain a fair exposition of our principles, and of the means by which we wish to carry them into effect. Above all let me recommend to you moderation, both in your views and in your language. It is thus that you will defeat the enemies of liberty, whose chief advantage consists in representing every proposal for Reform as tending to subvert the constitution. I shall be happy at all times to receive from you such communications as you may be pleased to honour me with, and to assist you by every means in my power, so long as your proceedings shall be temperately and wisely conducted, in endeavouring to obtain such a measure of Reform as will correct the abuses without impairing the forms or violating the principles of the constitution.

'I have the honour, &c.,

'C. GREY.'

But strictly constitutional as were the principles on which this Society was founded and the objects which

it had in view, and studiously moderate as was the language in which those views were advocated, it was always the policy of the Government to seek to confound it with the other more violent and really revolutionary Societies which no doubt also existed. Contemporary historians, attached for the most part to the Tory party, have followed this example; and nothing can be generally more unfair or erroneous than the impression which has consequently been created as to the principles and objects of this Society. It may be doubted, indeed, whether, considering the circumstances of the time, and what was afterwards shown to be the character and designs of some of the members, its formation was altogether a prudent measure; and on the latter ground especially, my father himself, in later years, as I have already mentioned, saw reason to regret the share he had taken in it. It is also certain that it tended to widen the breach already existing in the great Whig party. But numerically weak as the Opposition already was, it scarcely seems that the *immediate* effect of this Society could have been of much importance one way or the other; and on the other hand, in its ultimate consequences, when the principles on which the Society was founded achieved their final triumph in 1830–32, there can be no doubt that my father, as leader of the great Reform movement at the latter period, derived additional strength from the circumstance, acknowledged by the most inveterate of his opponents, that he was only giving

effect, as Minister, to the policy which he had consistently and unflinchingly advocated, through good report and evil report, from the time when, forty years before, he had first agitated the question of Reform as the organ of the 'Friends of the People.'

In 1793, in pursuance of the notice which he had given, my father brought forward his motion for referring the petition of the 'Friends of the People,' praying for Parliamentary Reform, to a committee. 'He well knew,' he said, 'the difficulty he should 'have to encounter in the argument as to the danger 'of the times. This indeed was a never-failing argu-'ment, in times of war and in times of peace. If our 'situation happened to be prosperous, it was then 'asked whether we could be more than happy or more 'than free? In the season of adversity, on the other 'hand, all reform or innovation was deprecated, from 'the pretended risk of increasing the evil and pressure 'of our situation. . . . From all this it would ap-'pear the time for Reform never yet had come, and 'never would come.' In the course of his speech on this occasion he added in a prophetic spirit, 'that he 'and his friends had published last year their opinions 'on this subject, and credit would some time or other '.be given them for it.' That credit has at length been given. The principles of progressive Reform are now, we may say, universally adopted; but at the time we are writing of, Ministers did not appeal in vain to the fears of the House. Under the terror

then inspired by the proceedings in France, the danger of bringing forward such questions at such a period was successfully urged, and the motion was rejected by a vast majority, only forty-one members being found in the House of Commons, after a two-days' debate, to vote in its favour. That Reform might at this time have been safely conceded, my father thus records his opinions in a letter, written in November 1793, to a friend in Northumberland: 'I am more 'convinced than ever,' he writes, 'that a Reform in 'Parliament might now be peaceably effected. "Mais 'cet effet tient à la minute, et dans peu il ne sera 'peut-être plus temps de regarder sa montre." . . . 'I am afraid that we are not wise enough to profit by 'experience, and what has occasioned the ruin of 'other Governments will overthrow this—a perse- 'verance in abuse until the people, maddened by 'excessive injury, and roused to a feeling of their 'own strength, will not stop within the limits of mo- 'derate reformation.'

'Things grow every day more unpromising,' he again writes to the same friend, in March 1794, 'and 'the high-prerogative doctrines of the Government on 'one side, and the violence of those on the other 'whose conduct I do not commend, but whose temper 'I cannot much wonder at, seem to threaten an 'alarming crisis.'*

* Letters to Thomas Bigge, Esq., kindly communicated to me by his son.

Failing in all his endeavours, renewed in succeeding sessions, to have the subject of Parliamentary Reform referred to the consideration of a Committee, my father, in 1797, brought forward himself a specific plan. But in 1797 the same fears which had hitherto indisposed men's minds to the entertaining of such a question still prevailed. They still saw confusion and revolution in every proposal for any change or improvement in our institutions, however constitutional the proposal might be, and however temperate the tone in which it was advocated; and it was easy for Ministers, taking advantage of these fears, to defeat all such proposals, as tending to inevitable anarchy and confusion, such as existed in France. The proposed measure was consequently rejected by a majority of two hundred and fifty-six to ninety-one.

Equally unavailing was the opposition which my father strenuously offered to what he considered the false system adopted by Government; that, namely, of endeavouring to check revolutionary principles by measures only of coercion and repression. The true way, he argued, to avert danger, was to remove any just cause of complaint; while the opposite course, which alone seemed to be relied upon by Ministers for the maintenance of tranquillity, could scarcely fail to produce the very evils against which their legislation was directed. 'If the conduct of any set of men,' he said, 'was calculated to excite insurrection, it was 'that of Ministers, who, by proclamations calumniating

'whole descriptions of men as seditious, and announcing 'insurrections that never existed, filled the minds of 'the people with false alarms, and taught every man 'to distrust, if not to hate, his neighbour.' 'And 'certainly,' he repeated upon a similar occasion a few years later, 'recourse ought not to be had to measures 'of terror. He was convinced that such a system 'would create that dissatisfaction and jealousy which 'had produced such fatal effects in other countries.'

Let me here state in Mr. Fox's words, the principles of the policy advocated by himself and that portion of the Whig party which, with my father, still adhered to him:—

'It may be asked,' he said, 'what would I propose 'to do in times of agitation like the present? I will 'answer openly. If there is a tendency in the 'Dissenters to discontent, because they conceive 'themselves to be unjustly suspected, and cruelly 'calumniated, I would instantly repeal the Test 'and Corporation Acts, and take from them, by such 'a step, all cause of complaint. If there were any 'persons tinctured with a republican spirit, because 'they thought the representative Government was 'more perfect in a republic, I would endeavour to 'amend the representation of the Commons, to show 'that the House of Commons, though not chosen by 'all, should have no other interest than to prove itself 'the representative of all. If there were men dissatisfied in Scotland or Ireland on account of exemptions

'and disabilities, of unjust prejudices and cruel re-
'strictions, I would repeal the penal statutes, which
'are a disgrace to our law books. If there were
'other complaints of grievances, I would redress them
'where they were really proved; but above all, I
'would constantly, and cheerfully, and patiently
'listen.'

Every one will judge for himself, according to his peculiar bias, whether the policy recommended by the Opposition, or that pursued at this time, by the Government, is the true policy to follow under such circumstances as the country was then placed in. Those who support the former may, however, be allowed to point, with some degree of confidence, to the result, which followed the course pursued by my father's Government in 1830—33, when he had an opportunity of carrying into practice the principles he now advocated in vain. The throne of France had again been overthrown by a revolution, which had extended to Belgium, and which had found its usual echo amongst the disaffected of all countries; and under the excitement caused by the events on the Continent, (rendered more dangerous, as it was, by the existence of a considerable amount of distress, and consequent discontent amongst the labouring classes at home,)* revolutionary and republican doctrines

* The feeling in London was such, that the Duke of Wellington had thought it necessary to advise the King not to pay an intended visit to the City; whilst in the agricultural districts incendiarism prevailed to a fearful extent.

were rife through the land; and political unions, proclaiming the wildest theories of Government, sprang up on all sides. Great was the alarm they occasioned, and strong the pressure put upon Government to induce it to adopt energetic measures for their repression. But though my father was always prepared, by a vigorous exertion of the existing powers of the law, to uphold its authority, and to punish its violation, he steadily refused to have recourse to extraordinary means, and, adhering to the conciliatory policy he had advocated in 1792, the danger which had been apprehended from these bodies passed away, and even those who had been the most alarmed, and the most clamorous for strong measures, afterwards admitted the wisdom of his decision.

But far different was the course pursued by Mr. Pitt's Government in 1792, and the following years. Supported by immense majorities in Parliament, Ministers obtained a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act; various enactments were passed, giving a wider construction to charges of treason and sedition; proclamations were issued against seditious meetings, &c. But when, encouraged by the support they thus received in Parliament, they endeavoured to give effect to their coercive measures, and under the new interpretation of treason, Horne Tooke, Hardy, Thelwall, &c. &c., were in October 1794, brought to trial at the Old Bailey, they no longer met with the same success. The prosecutions thus instituted by the Attorney-

General, resulted, as political prosecutions of this nature generally have done in England, in the acquittal of all the prisoners.

'I have written all the news,' my father writes to my mother, 'to Mrs. Ponsonby, or rather have told 'her that there is nothing new. The only thing I 'have omitted, is the arraignment of the prisoners for 'high treason this morning at the Old Bailey. They 'all pleaded not guilty . . .

'Horne Tooke made a speech on the subject, which 'he introduced by saying, "My lord, you *as yet* do 'not know what imprisonment is." When he was 'asked, as is usual, how he would be tried? He 'shook his head, and said, "I *would* be tried by God 'and my country". . . The first trial, which will be 'Hardy's, comes on on Tuesday. I believe I shall 'attend it in order to learn how to conduct myself 'when it comes to my turn. You see by these new 'constructions of treason, they have found a much 'better way of disposing of obnoxious persons, than 'by sending them to Botany Bay; and one which 'will save both you and me a great deal of trouble. 'I am not, however, very ambitious of being classed 'even with Algernon Sydney.'

My father, again writing from the Old Bailey, where he attended these trials, denounces strongly the 'new 'constructions of treason under which no man was 'safe,' and the 'shocking scenes of infamy' exhibited in the examination of the Government spies. 'I have

'no power,' he says, 'nor do I believe the English 'language affords words sufficiently strong, to express 'my abhorrence of the whole proceeding. If this 'man' (Hardy, who was first brought to the bar) 'is 'hanged, there is no safety for any one. Innocence 'no longer affords protection to a person obnoxious to 'those in power, and I do not know how soon it may 'come to my turn.'* And in another letter he says, 'I am writing from the bench with a judge at my 'elbow, who I am not quite sure does not think I 'ought rather to be in Mr. Hardy's place at the bar. 'I went last night,' he adds, 'with Sheridan and Lau-'derdale, during an interval of the trial, to see Horne 'Tooke in Newgate. I always disliked him, and 'never before met him but in contest; but the oppres-'sion and persecution of which he is the victim, make 'me forget all that is past.' Again he says, 'So hor-'rible a scene of perjury as was exhibited last night 'makes one blush for the depravity of human nature. 'But what shall we say of those who can employ such 'instruments, to whose means of seduction, which poor 'men often cannot resist, these horrors are owing?' . . . 'Such have been in general,' he adds, 'the last 'efforts of expiring Governments, and they only acce-'lerate the conclusion. God grant that the effect 'which experience proves, in most countries, to have

* Wherever, as frequently happens, I quote letters without saying to whom they are addressed, it is to be understood that they are to my mother.

'followed from such causes, may not happen in this.—'I think the whole proceeding equally wicked and im-'politic, and these men, alive or dead, who are now 'under trial, will be more dangerous than they were 'before.'

It was long, however, before our Ministers learnt the lesson which the failure of these trials was calculated to teach—that popular discontent is not to be successfully met by suspensions of the Habeas Corpus Act and by prosecutions for high treason. And it was not till many years later, after repeated failures on the part of a Tory Government to stifle the voice of the people by such means, that a Whig Administration was at length formed under my father, vindicating by the success of their measures in restoring tranquillity to a disturbed country, the soundness of the principles of Government which he and his friends had so long, in Opposition, advocated in vain.

In 1798 my father was summoned to Maidstone as a witness to character on behalf of Arthur O'Connor, who, with Dr. O'Coigley and others, were tried for high treason in consequence of their supposed connection with the Irish rebellion. This was a very different case from that of the English agitators, to whose trials allusion has already been made. In their case no doubt could exist of the treasonable nature of the designs of the Irish rebels, and the only question could be as to how far Mr. O'Connor and the other prisoners were concerned in them. 'You will probably hear,'

he writes to my mother, 'before this reaches you, of 'O'Connor's acquittal . . . . This is all the good I 'have to tell you, for what will you say of the 'humanity and justice of the Duke of Portland' (then Home Secretary), 'when I tell you that there was a 'warrant in Court, signed by him, to take O'Connor 'on another charge of high treason! Apprehensive 'of this, as soon as sentence of death had been passed 'on O'Coigley, O'Connor stepped over the dock, in 'hopes that he was legally discharged, and might get 'away before the messengers could seize him. They 'immediately rushed forward, calling out to stop him, 'as they had another warrant. Some of his friends 'endeavoured to obstruct them, and this for some 'minutes created a great confusion in the Court, which 'ended by O'Connor's being seized by the messengers. 'He then addressed the Court, and said he would 'rather be consigned to the same fate as O'Coigley, and 'suffer death immediately, than drag out an existence 'under such continued persecution. . . . He is to be 'removed immediately to Ireland, I suppose to be 'tried there, where, I suppose, the Duke of Portland 'and his associates think they manage things better.' O'Connor was acquitted, as above-mentioned. Dr. O'Coigley was convicted, and afterwards executed. 'And to say the truth,' my father says, in writing of the latter, 'he deserves his fate.' But against the system of government in Ireland which had led to the outbreak, his voice was raised as loudly as it was against

that which he so long combated in vain in England; unfortunately, with as little effect. 'Alas!' he writes on the 23rd of May 1798, in speaking of Ireland, 'what can we do? *We* have no means of obtaining 'redress. But, I confess, against those who have I 'begin to feel almost as much indignation as against 'the active authors of our calamities.' And again in July of the same year:* 'Bad as the public accounts 'are,' he says, 'they are not worse than I expected, or 'than I shall continue to expect, so long as that hor- 'rible system, to which I for one shall ever ascribe 'the present revolt, continues to be acted on. We 'used all the efforts we could to give some check to 'it, and I really thought that by the last debate in 'the House of Commons we had made at least such 'an impression with respect to the conduct of Lord 'Clare as would probably have occasioned his removal 'from office. . . . In the House of Lords, however, a 'very different tone was assumed, and put an end to 'all these speculations. From that moment all hopes 'of any change, either in the councils or system of 'Ireland, ceased in my mind, and with them all hopes 'of preserving for any length of time the connection 'of the two countries. . . . I for one,' he proceeds, 'cannot rejoice in the accounts that are called good. 'Even in the view of our Ministers, who rest for the 'suppression of the revolt upon the use of unqualified 'force alone, I cannot think them so good as they

* Letter to Mrs. Ponsonby, July 11, 1798.

'would make us believe. . . . To me, however, who 'think the use of the scourge and the bayonet will 'only create fresh provocation, and that though you 'may gain victories, victories will not gain the peo- 'ple, the accounts published every day in the Govern- 'ment papers furnish only fresh matter of despondency 'and dismay.'

While parties were thus at issue on the subject of our domestic policy, the progress of events had also involved the decision by this country of the question of peace or war. Several discussions on the same subject had already taken place, in which my father took an active part; first, on the occasion of a dispute with Spain, respecting certain occurrences in Nootka Sound; and afterwards, with respect to the circumstances under which an armament had been prepared for possible hostilities against Russia. The details of these disputes would now be of little interest, and they are only referred to here in so far as their discussion afforded my father an opportunity of explaining the general principles which invariably guided him on similar questions, and more particularly on that (of constant recurrence for so many years), of the nature of our relations with the French Republic and Empire.

On the question of peace or war, he invariably separated the consideration of the measures necessary for the efficient conduct of a war, if war there was to be, from that of the conduct of the Government which had led to it. To inquire into the latter, he considered

the special privilege and even duty of Parliament. Nor could the fear, or indeed the certainty, of having his motives misconstrued or misrepresented, induce him to forego the privilege, or deter him from the performance of the duty.

Having given his hearty concurrence to the address moved by Mr. Pitt, to assure His Majesty of the zealous and effectual support of the Commons, should the dispute with Spain unfortunately lead to hostilities, he afterwards made several motions for the production of papers to explain the state of our relations with that country. He admitted, to the fullest extent, the wisdom of our institutions, in giving to the Crown the prerogative of making peace or war; but he combated on every occasion the doctrine by which it was sought to shelter ministerial responsibility under the shadow of that prerogative, and insisted strongly on the right of the House of Commons to full information.

'As such a motion,' he said, in allusion to one he had made in this view, 'might be construed as if it 'were designed to embarrass Government and impede 'their measures, he found it necessary to declare, that 'no man felt more strongly for the honour and dignity 'of the British nation than he did. National honour 'was thought a visionary thing by some, but he hardly 'imagined it would be professed in that House to be 'so. Every nation ought to be careful of that honour; 'it ought not to be guilty of one single mean submis-'sion, lest such submission should countenance other

'attacks upon its honour, a vigorous maintenance 'of which was the most likely means of preserving the 'blessings of peace.'

'No man applauded more than he did,' he observed, upon another occasion, 'the wisdom of the Legislature 'in giving to the Executive Power the separate right 'of negotiating all treaties of alliance, and of war and 'peace. No man felt the principle more strongly or 'acknowledged its value more gratefully. It was to 'that principle, maintained and supported by the 'House, that we owed our honour, and the rank we 'held amongst the nations of Europe. But if this 'principle was so sacred, how were we to secure it 'inviolate? Where were we to look for the preserva-'tion of this power from abuse, but to Parliament?'

. . . 'It was a first principle, in that House, to 'inquire, when inquiry was safe, and might be adopted 'without the smallest degree of danger.'† And again, on a subsequent occasion: 'He could not sit down,' he said, 'without taking notice of those doctrines 'of confidence which were every day carried to a 'greater extent, and which converted the House of 'Commons into what was little better than the Parlia-'ment of Paris before the late Revolution. If this 'doctrine of confidence was still extended, that House 'would soon serve no other purpose than merely to 'approve and register the acts of the King's Ministers.'

* May 12, 1790.

† Speech on moving for Papers relative to the Convention with Spain, Dec. 13, 1790.

. . . 'They were desired to give the Minister full 'credit for everything he had proposed; they were to 'act on his bare word. This, he contended, was no 'part of the necessary confidence due to the executive 'Government.' . . . 'He had not the smallest objec- 'tion to the Royal prerogative; and particularly to 'that part of it which enabled the Crown to make 'peace and war, and to manage foreign negotiations; 'but he thought they were the best friends of that 'prerogative who wished to confine it within proper 'limits.'* And in the course of another debate, he again asserted 'the right of the House of Commons—a 'right not to be defeated by new-fangled doctrines of 'confidence or prerogative.' . . . 'A right in that 'House to inquire into the justice, policy, and wisdom 'of a war, before involving the country in expence in 'support of it.'†

'He hoped,' he once more repeated—on moving for papers relative to the war between Russia and the Porte—'he hoped that the House would never be so 'attached to a system of blind confidence in Adminis- 'tration, or so remiss in the discharge of its first and 'most sacred duty, as to neglect all inquiry. This 'was now the third time he had come forward to move 'for the production of papers, and no ill success should 'discourage him from persisting in what he considered

* Speech on moving Resolutions respecting the Preparations for a War with Russia, April 12, 1791.

† Speech on moving for information respecting the cause of the present armament, June 2, 1791.

'to be his duty. First, when he moved for papers on 'the subject of the Spanish armament, it was then 'urged as an objection, the necessity which existed for 'secrecy, and the danger of producing papers pending 'a negotiation. Secondly, when he had taken an 'opportunity of renewing that motion, when called 'upon for a vote of approbation, it was found that 'though the negotiation was over, the reign of confi-'dence had not ceased.' . . . 'Thus with confidence 'pending negotiations, and confidence after their con-'clusion, the Minister appeared to have got a general 'indemnity.' . . . 'The question was, whether they 'should, on that occasion act as became the honest 'representatives of a free people, or like the syco-'phants of the Crown, and the flatterers of the people. 'He reminded the House of Her Imperial Majesty's 'answer to the arrogant demands of the right honour-'able gentleman. She had said that there was a duty 'which she owed to her subjects, and that she was 'bound to convince them that their blood and treasure 'had neither been wantonly nor unnecessarily ex-'pended. He lamented that it should be necessary 'to quote the opinion of a despotic monarch, who well 'knew that absolute as her power was, as her subjects 'themselves confessed it to be, and extensive as were 'her dominions, the existence of the one, and the 'integrity of the other, depended on opinion. She 'well knew that in this country, obedience to the 'Government implied protection to the subject, and

'it was incumbent on that House to take up her 'language, and to say that there was a duty which 'they owed to their constituents, and that they were 'bound to convince them that their treasure had not 'been wantonly or unnecessarily expended.'

It has not been my object in this memoir to enter into the history of the particular events of the time, further than as they serve to illustrate the general principles on which my father based his political opinions. Otherwise it might not have been without interest, considering the late war in which we have been engaged with Russia, to consider in some detail the causes which had almost led us into a quarrel with the Empress Catherine in 1791, and from which, indeed, we only escaped by the abandonment of the pretensions we had at first put forward. Amongst other points that we had at first insisted on, was the restoration of Ocksakow (a fortress on the right bank of the Dnieper, and opposite Kinburn) to the Turks. We yielded to its retention by Russia, as well as to the other demands of the Empress, whose remarks, quoted above, had reference especially to this object. The dispute respecting the possession of this fortress, gives a good measure of the advance made by Russia in the East since 1791.

On the general question of peace and war my father had thus expressed his opinion:—'There were some 'truths,' he said, 'which appeared to be so clear and 'evident that no man was disposed to dispute them.

'Amongst these, he conceived, ought to be reckoned 'the just causes for going to war.' . . . 'He should 'maintain this proposition, that the only just cause of 'war originated in the principle of self-defence; and 'no war could be justified on the grounds (to use a 'fashionable phrase) of political expediency, whatever 'the consequences of it might be, and however profit-'able and advantageous it might turn out to the State. 'The principle of self-defence, therefore, was the sole 'ground on which a war could be justified. The 'cases in which a war was just, he conceived, might 'be reduced to three heads:—First, when it was 'undertaken to redeem a right forcibly withheld, and 'to which we had an irresistible claim; secondly, in 'providing for future safety; and the last, a right of 'repelling an unjust attack. These,' he said, 'were the 'only three causes that could justify any war, except 'another, which might be included under the third 'head, and that was, where an ally had been unjustly 'attacked. He laid particular stress upon the words, '*unjustly attacked*, not being willing to admit that 'when an ally was an aggressor, and refused to make 'reparation, the nation with whom he was in alliance 'was obliged to support him. A nation was bound 'to support an ally only in the case of an unjust attack, 'and even then only according to the specific meaning 'of the treaty entered into between them. The only 'three causes, therefore, for going to war were, to 'redeem a right, to provide against danger, and to

'repel an attack; and any principle of supposed policy 'that stood in opposition to these three causes, and 'did not come within one or other of them, could 'never be a just cause of war. *Omnia quæ defendi, 'repeti, repelli possunt.* These were the words of 'Camillus to his soldiers, and were full of wisdom, 'policy, and justice.' . . . 'Perhaps he might be 'told that he had admitted that a country was bound, 'for its own safety, to guard against the dangerous 'aggrandizement of any one power. This was cer- 'tainly true; but he must be understood to suppose 'that that aggrandizement was aimed at by violent 'and unjust means; that it was clear and obvious; 'that the danger arising from it was evident; and the 'not providing for it in the best way in our power 'would be to neglect our own safety. The country 'which failed to watch and oppose the aggrandizement 'of another that became dangerous, would neglect its 'own interest. But he could not see the necessity of 'that superfluous caution which was alarmed at every 'slight appearance, and anxious to guard against every 'remote contingency.' . . . 'It was on this principle, 'on the first view of it, that the balance of power of 'Europe had been founded.' . . . 'To that system 'and to the preservation of it, he had heard the 'epithets of wild and romantic applied. The balance 'of power in Europe was, indeed, a matter of the 'greatest importance. He would not tell the peasant 'that this balance was wild and romantic. He would

'not seek to convince him that the object which he 'incurred so many burthens to support was a mere 'illusion. If it was necessary, he would advise the 'peasant to submit to new burthens in order to pre-'serve that balance from any real danger. If the war 'was just in principle, and necessary in policy, he would 'tell him that, as a member of the State, he was in-'terested in its welfare, and that his sufferings might be 'misfortunes, but were not injuries.'* Mr. Adolphus, in his history, says of this speech, that 'Mr. Grey re-'peated an old observation on the unimportance of 'the balance of power to the poor tenant of a thatched 'cottage ! !'

In accordance with the principles thus declared, my father warmly seconded the endeavours of Mr. Fox, in 1793, to prevent this country from being hurried, as he thought unnecessarily, into a war with the French Republic.

The main principle on which they acted was, as explained by Mr. Fox, 'that it was the true policy 'of every nation to treat with the existing Govern-'ment of every other nation with which it had relative 'interests, without inquiring or regarding how that 'Government was constituted, or by what means those 'who exercised it came into power.' And many years later my father stoutly asserted the same principle, in a speech against the policy of resting the renewal of the war with France, after the return of Napoleon

* Speech on Preparations for a War with Russia, April 12, 1791.

from Elba, on personal objections to that individual and his Government. 'The nature of a Government,' he then argued, as Mr Fox argued at the commencement of the war with the Republic, 'might justify you in demanding securities for your own safety, 'which you might not think it necessary to require 'were that Government otherwise constituted, but 'could not of itself be deemed a sufficient cause of 'war, unless the securities which you might think its 'existence rendered necessary, were refused.'

He now placed his opinions on this subject, as they applied to the war of 1793, on record, in the form of an address to the Crown,* in which, after professing the attachment of the Commons to the Sovereign and the family on the throne, and to the Constitution—their zeal, at the same time, for the interests and honour of the nation—and their readiness at all times 'to 'support His Majesty in any measures which a due 'observance of the faith of treaties, the dignity of the 'Crown, or the security of his dominions might compel 'him to undertake,'—he proposed further to declare: 'that it was no less their resolution than it was 'their duty to second his efforts in the war thus fatally 'commenced, so long as it shall continue; but we deem 'it a duty equally incumbent on us, to solicit His 'Majesty's attention to those reasons or pretexts, by 'which his servants have laboured to justify a conduct 'on their part, which we cannot but consider as having

* February 21, 1792.

'contributed in a great measure to produce the present 'rupture.' . . . 'We will not dissemble our opinion 'that the Decree of the National Convention of France, 'on the 19th Nov. 1792, was in a great measure liable 'to the objections urged against it; but we cannot 'admit that a war upon the single ground of that 'Decree, unaccompanied by any overt acts by which 'we or our allies might be directly attacked, would be 'justified, as necessary and unavoidable. Certainly 'not, unless upon a regular demand made by His 'Majesty's Ministers of security and explanation . . . 'the French had refused to give to His Majesty such 'explanation and security.' . . . 'The grounds upon 'which His Majesty's Ministers have advised him to 'refuse the renewal of intercourse with the existing 'Government of France, appear to us neither justified 'by the reason of the thing itself, nor by the usage of 'nations, nor by any expediency arising from the pre-'sent state of circumstances.' . . . 'Deploring as we 'have ever done (the address proceeded), the melan-'choly event which has lately happened in France '(the execution of the King), it would yet have been 'some consolation to us, to have heard that the power-'ful interposition of the British nation on this subject 'had at least been offered, although it should have 'been unfortunately rejected. But instead of receiving 'such consolation from the conduct of His Majesty's 'Ministers, we have seen them, with extreme astonish-'ment, employing as an incentive to hostilities, an

'event which they had made no effort to avert by 'negotiation. This inaction they could only excuse 'on the principle that the internal conduct of nations '(whatever may be our opinion of its morality) was 'no proper ground for interference or remonstrance 'from foreign States; a principle from which it must 'still more clearly follow, that such internal conduct 'could never be an admissible or justifying reason for 'war. We cannot refrain from observing, that such 'frequent allusions as have been made to an event '(confessedly no ground of rupture), seemed to us 'to have arisen from a sinister intention to derive from 'the humanity of Englishmen, popularity for measures 'which their deliberate judgment would have repro-'bated, and to influence the most virtuous sensibilities 'of His Majesty's people into a blind and furious zeal 'for a war of vengeance.'* This address being moved merely as a matter of form, in order that the opinions thus expressed might be recorded on the journals of the House, led to no discussion, and was negatived without a division.

But while condemning the policy of going to war on

* From a letter from Lord Grenville to Lord Auckland, of the 6th November 1792, published in the correspondence of Lord Auckland, it would appear that the war now entered upon, was indeed a war prompted, as my father said, rather by personal feeling, than by national policy. None of the advocates for maintaining peace with the French Republic, speak more strongly in favour of non-intervention and of keeping 'ourselves out of the struggle upon the Continent,' than does Lord Grenville in this letter.—*Correspondence of William, 1st Lord Auckland*, vol. ii., pp. 464, 465.

the grounds stated by Ministers, my father repudiated in the strongest manner the imputation of being insensible to the honour of the country, or of counselling any course incompatible with it. 'It was asked,' he said, in the course of the discussions on the subject of peace with France, 'was Great Britain to sneak and crouch 'to France? No! neither sneak nor crouch, but 'negotiate like a great and high-minded nation; and if 'redress was refused for any injury offered, then de-'nounce war.' . . . 'We were not to be hurried away 'by our indignation against the perpetrators of the 'crimes committed in France; we are to decide on 'national policy, not on personal feeling.' . . . 'I 'will maintain our treaties with our allies, but first I 'will advise them, if necessary, to concede a point 'that it may be beneficial to concede, and let it be 'shown that we have done all in our power to bring 'the French to an amicable arrangement, and then I 'may yield to a war, but still with reluctance.'*

And now, as ever, he upheld the necessity, if war should unhappily ensue, of the most vigorous prosecution of it. 'If we must have a war,' he said, 'it must 'be a war of vigour and exertion, not such a petty 'warfare as some gentlemen seem to think, and the 'Minister in his speech from the Throne would in-'sinuate.'†

* Speech on Mr. Fox's motion for sending a Minister to Paris, Dec. 15, 1792.

† Ibid.

Acting upon the principle thus declared, the Opposition showed every readiness to give the Minister all the means necessary for an energetic prosecution of the war, and Mr. Fox emphatically declared he would have voted for 40,000 seamen as readily as for the 25,000 demanded by the Government. With this they were taunted in the course of these debates, particularly by Mr. Burke, in answer to whom my father said: 'The 'right honourable gentleman had stated it to be a 'new case that any member should vote for the sup- 'port of the war and at the same time condemn that 'war; but had the right honourable gentleman never 'been himself in such a situation? Had he not sup- 'ported the war against America, though he threat- 'ened Ministers with an impeachment for involving 'the country in it? It was the duty of that House 'to support a war whenever we were involved in it, 'but it was also their duty to examine the measures 'of Ministers, and if they were found to be measures 'of aggression, it was their duty to address the Crown 'for their removal and punishment, and to hold out 'such honourable terms of peace to the enemy as 'might induce them to end the war.'*

Surely the extracts above given from my father's speeches at the commencement of the revolutionary war are a sufficient answer to the accusations with which it was the invariable practice of Ministers and

* Speech on the Debate on Mr. Fox's Resolutions against the War with France, Feb. 18, 1793.

their partisans to meet the arguments of those who condemned either the policy of the war itself or the manner in which it was conducted,—of being insensible to the honour of the country or of endeavouring to thwart and embarrass the Government in its endeavours to maintain it.

Mr. Fox, the great leader of the Whigs, was more particularly the object of such attacks,* and a declaration from Lord Sheffield that he 'felt ashamed of the 'enthusiasm he had once felt for that right honour-'able gentleman,' gave my father an opportunity of proclaiming, on the contrary, 'that if the enthusiasm 'of any man for my right honourable friend be abated, 'mine, if possible, is increased. The state of the 'country calls upon him to stand in the gap and 'defend the constitution. He has said he will do so, 'and while I have power of body or mind he shall 'not stand alone. A firm band of admiring friends— 'not the less respectable, not the less likely to prevail 'from the present disproportion of their numbers— 'will faithfully stand by him against all the calumnies 'of those who betray, while they affect to defend the 'constitution.'†

* This was only natural, and to be expected at the time while the discussions were in progress, and when party spirit was at its height; but the virulence of the editor of Mr. Rose's Diaries, whenever he speaks of Mr. Fox, whose name he never introduces without some contumelious epithet, is quite inconceivable; and this, while he is lavish of his censure on others for writing with a party bias! 1860.

† Speech on Mr. Fox's motion for sending a Minister to Paris, Dec. 15, 1792.

I may pass shortly over other questions which came under discussion during this period, of sufficient importance at the time, but of which the interest has now for the most part passed away. It has already been stated that my father took an active part in opposition to the coercive measures of the Government—to the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, the Traitorous Correspondence, the Seditious Meetings Bills, &c.; and in 1799 he joined also in opposing the Alien Bill,* on the ground that no case of necessity for such an enactment had been shown. He admitted that it was the 'characteristic of free States 'to vote extraordinary powers in times of extraordi-'nary danger, but,' he said, 'there was another cha-'racteristic of a free Government, and it was the chief 'excellence of our constitution;—it was this: the Ex-'ecutive Power was never to judge of the necessity 'of that extraordinary power; it was always the pro-'vince of the legislature to form its opinion upon that 'subject, and therefore when any power was to be 'given to the Crown in cases of emergency, it must 'be given by Parliament.' In the course of the discussion it had been argued that the King by his own prerogative could do all that was proposed by this Bill; but against that doctrine my father protested now, as he did again in opposing a similar measure in 1817, when the same claim was set up. The oppo-

* By this Bill the residence of foreigners in this country was subjected to very vexatious conditions, and a summary power was given of removing them from the kingdom.

sition, as might be expected, was of no avail, and the measure was carried by the usual overwhelming majority that supported the Minister in all his coercive policy.

In 1795 my father concurred in the opposition that was offered to the second payment of the Prince of Wales's debts, which he resisted on the ground of the assurance given at the time his debts were before paid in 1787, that no more should be incurred.* The large sum of 650,000*l.* was now farther demanded for the same purpose, and it was commonly believed that the grant of this money was the main inducement held out to the Prince in order to obtain his consent to the marriage which had been proposed to him with the Princess of Brunswick. Considering the result of that marriage, it may perhaps be thought matter of regret that the opposition to the grant was not successful.

On the question of the Regency—which was originally raised in 1788, on the occasion of the King's first illness, and which involved a great constitutional principle,—my father took the line that he followed on subsequent occasions when the subject came again under discussion; arguing in favour of proceeding by

* In 1783 the Coalition Government proposed an allowance of £100,000 for the Prince of Wales, on his coming of age—which the editor of Mr. Rose's Diaries makes the subject of a sneering remark on the claims of the Whigs to be considered 'a *liberal* Administration.' He says nothing, however, of the liberality of Mr. Pitt's Administration, which, having paid the Prince's debts in 1787, now came to Parliament in 1795, for £650,000 more for the same purpose!—*Diaries of Rt. Hon. G. Rose*, vol. i., p. 100.

address to the Prince of Wales to assume the authority which of right belonged to him as heir apparent to the throne, and in support of an unrestricted Regency. 'The restrictions,' he said, 'would obstruct the Regent 'in the just and useful exercise of his power, and 'would limit him in the choice of his political ser- 'vants, while, should he or his Minister be disposed 'to abuse that power, they would oppose no strong 'obstacle to his designs.'

Now that the question can be judged of free from the bias of party politics which then influenced its decision, the highest authorities appear to concur in the opinion that the course proposed by the Whigs, of proceeding by address from the two Houses, was the constitutional one, though the argument in favour of the inherent right of the Prince of Wales to the Regency may have been pushed too far. Party politics were, however, at this time, as they were again in 1810, when the Regency Bill was passed, mixed up with the question. The Prince of Wales being considered the adherent of Mr. Fox, the restricted Regency was proposed by the Government, and would undoubtedly have been carried, as it was in 1810, had not the King's recovery postponed for the time any decision on the subject.

Having failed in all their efforts to promote a pacific policy abroad, and a more conciliatory system of Government at home, the Whig party had, after the defeat of my father's motion for Reform in 1797, gene-

rally withdrawn from their attendance in Parliament. Of this secession my father in after years always expressed his disapprobation, and regretted the share he had taken in advising it. The grounds on which that step was adopted were thus stated by him in 1802, in answer to some taunts on the subject thrown out by Mr. Pitt, who 'took advantage,' he said, 'of 'one or two points in Mr. Whitbread's speech to 'pronounce a general panegyric on his own Adminis-'tration.' 'The right hon. gentleman,' he proceeded, 'is not content with defending his own conduct. He 'accuses us of despairing of the resources of the 'country; of leaving the House under such an im-'pression, and of returning only for the purpose of 'obstructing the measures of Government. I am not 'accountable to the right hon. gentleman for any part 'of my conduct. I wish, however, to say, that neither 'I, nor any of those with whom I acted, ever despaired 'of the resources of the country. We reprobated the 'system pursued by the late Ministers; we opposed 'to the utmost of our power their destructive measures, 'and we predicted consequences of the most disastrous 'kind, and even ruin, as the result of the adherence to 'those measures. But with a system of moderation 'towards foreign powers, instead of insult and in-'dignity; of laudable economy instead of lavish pro-'fusion; of constitutional liberty instead of unjus-'tifiable infringements of the liberty of the subject, 'we never despaired of the fortunes of our country.

'We left Parliament, not because we despaired of the 'national resources, but because our views and the 'views of Ministers, supported by a great majority of 'the House, were so different, that we saw no good 'could be derived from our attendance. Since that 'time occasions have occurred when we have thought 'it our duty to resume our places in this House. I, 'for one, however, must declare that I have never 'attended without reluctance, and that my attendance 'has been dictated by an imperious sense of duty. 'Any apology for my conduct at present would be 'impertinent. My reasons for taking the step are 'sufficiently well known, and I leave the decision of 'them to the public; or, if they cannot be fairly esti-'mated by the public now, I leave them to the decision 'of an impartial posterity. If the right hon. gentleman 'looks back with pleasure to the whole conduct of his 'Administration, I assure him that I look back to the 'share I have had in opposition to his general system 'with no less satisfaction.'

One subject of debate on which my father resumed his attendance in 1799 and 1800, though Mr. Fox and the party in general still continued to absent themselves, was the proposal of the Minister for a legislative Union between England and Ireland, and he formed one of the very small minority by which that measure was opposed throughout.

By his marriage in 1794* he had become intimately

* To Mary Elizabeth, daughter of Mr., afterwards Lord Ponsonby. [Her

connected with the leading members of the Irish Liberal party, and the interest which he at all times took in the affairs of Ireland was thus naturally increased.

It did not, however, require such a consideration to make him disapprove of—and condemn as strongly as he had done a similar system in England—the coercive policy adopted by Ministers in their administration of Ireland, and, as it seemed to him, alone trusted to by them, either for the suppression of present disturbances, or for the maintenance of future tranquillity. A letter to Mrs. Ponsonby, already quoted (page 31, ante), contains, as will have been seen, a strong denunciation of the policy adopted at this time towards Ireland.

The opposition which my father now gave to the legislative Union between England and Ireland, was chiefly founded on the means which had been adopted to carry it, contrary to the known feelings and wishes of the Irish people. We may infer the nature of those means from the correspondence of the late Duke of Wellington, when he was Secretary for Ireland, recently published (1860) by the present duke, in

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Her grandfather had been Speaker of the Irish House of Commons, and was closely connected with Lord Shannon and other leading members of the Irish Liberal party at that time. Her uncle, Mr. George Ponsonby, was Chancellor of Ireland during Lord Grenville's Administration, and afterwards, on the removal of my father to the House of Lords, was acknowledged as Leader of the Opposition in the House of Commons.

which frequent allusion is made to the 'secret union 'pensions,' &c., by which, doubtless, support to the ministerial plan had been purchased. My father blamed the Government as 'ill-advised in pressing 'forward a measure which the first principle of policy, 'namely, the tranquillizing of a great part of the 'empire, should have induced them at all events to 'suspend.' . . . 'If the truth be,' he said, 'that the 'free, unbiassed, uncontrolled opinion of the Irish 'nation is decidedly in favour of the measure,' (it had been so stated by the Minister,) 'I see no objection 'to proceeding; but if the case be different, and the 'Irish took every opportunity left to them of testifying 'their abhorrence of a Union, we are bound, in reason 'and justice, not to proceed one step further in the 'business.' And again, 'We have no right,' he said, 'to discuss the question, unless it be proved to us 'that the passing of these resolutions will be agreeable 'to the great body of the Irish nation.'

He argued also, (it may be thought, perhaps, not without reason, considering what the state of Ireland has been up to a very recent period, when more than half a century had elapsed since the passing of the Union,) 'that the evils by which that country had been so 'long afflicted, did not originate entirely in the exist-'ence of a separate Parliament, and that the remedy 'need not be sought in its abolition.'

A principal inducement held out to the Irish Parliament and nation in order to obtain their concurrence

in the proposed measure, was the hope (to give it no stronger name) encouraged by Mr. Pitt, that the legislative Union would be followed by the removal of the Roman Catholic disabilities. The event, however, justified the fears expressed by my father during the discussions on the Bill, that 'those measures of 'liberality and justice towards the Catholics of Ire-'land, which were expected as fruits of a legislative 'Union, are yet far from being realized.' Having succeeded in carrying the Union, Mr. Pitt found himself utterly unable to give effect to the hope which he had encouraged, if not the engagement he had entered into, and resigned office;—nor was it till thirty years later that the consideration of the claims of the Irish Catholics to equal rights with their Protestant fellow-subjects, having been forced by irresistible circumstances on a reluctant sovereign, the Whigs mainly contributed, by their cordial and disinterested support, to enable a ministry, the principal members of which had all their lives been opposed to any concession, to carry a measure, for which they themselves had forfeited office, and repeatedly sacrificed all hopes of power; and the settlement of which by their aid was to lead to no change in their own political situation.

I cannot refrain (though I am aware that I am again anticipating what belongs properly to a much later period) from here inserting some remarks taken from an article in the 'Edinburgh Review' on the settle-

ment of the Catholic Question in 1829, which appears to me only to do justice to my father and the Whig party on that occasion.

'In commenting upon the invidious remarks to 'which the conduct of the Ministers was exposed, we 'have been led to make mention of that pursued by 'their adversaries—perhaps we should rather say, 'those who had been their adversaries. But where 'all are praiseworthy there may be some peculiarly 'entitled to admiration, and we doubt if at this 'moment there is any one so blinded by party preju- 'dice, as not to reflect with feelings of heartfelt 'respect upon the course followed by Lord Grey on 'this great question. He sacrificed power in 1807, 'with his colleagues, Lords Grenville, &c., and was 'made the object of a religious and political outcry, 'which, having driven him from office, deprived him 'also of his seat for his native county. Those who 'succeeded upon the clamours thus raised, (some of 'them all the while friends of emancipation,) carried 'silently a few years later the very measure for which 'they had cried him down. For no other reason than 'his attachment to this great question, has he been, 'during by far the greater portion of his life, excluded 'from the service of the State. He now sees it 'brought forward by his adversaries, and he hastens 'to lend them, in completing the work, an aid as 'hearty and zealous as it is brilliant and decisive.

'Yet we doubt not there are who still go on with 'the cuckoo note, that all politicians are alike, and 'that there is no virtue in public men.'

One ground on which my father opposed the Union had reference to the question of Parliamentary Reform, and, strongly impressed, as he was, with the necessity of such a measure, had no doubt greatly influenced the course which he now pursued. This was the belief that the addition of one hundred Irish members to the House of Commons, would, under the existing system, only serve, as the Scotch union had done, to increase the power of the Minister. Influenced by this consideration, he moved in the debate for going into committee on the Union Bill, that it should be an 'instruction to the Committee, to take into 'their consideration the most effectual means of pro-'viding for, and securing, the independence of Parliament.' His plan was, to make room for the one hundred Irish members by abolishing an equal number of seats for rotten boroughs—buying up these seats as was done at the same time in Ireland. He often afterwards expressed his opinion that if this had been carried into effect, it would have obviated, or at least deferred, the necessity for a great measure of Reform. He also took that occasion of once more asserting the principles which ever guided him in advocating Parliamentary Reform.

'I wish,' he said, 'to guard against the insinuation

'so often thrown out against those who are favourable
'to Reform that they are inclined to be swayed too
'much by theories of government and systems of
'speculative perfection. These are far from the prin-
'ciples which I have ever followed or approved. I
'never proposed any scheme of Reform to this House
'upon the mere recommendation of a specious and
'beautiful theory. The only reason why I ever urged
'the House to adopt a measure of Parliamentary Re-
'form was because it appeared to me to be a neces-
'sary remedy for an existing evil. No man can sub-
'scribe more cordially than I do to the maxim, that
'in Government practical good is infinitely preferable
'to speculative perfection. I know that it is incum-
'bent on every wise legislative assembly to be guided
'by the dictates of this fundamental rule. Without
'it, Government would be destitute of all steadiness
'of operation and uniformity of design. Instead of
'following maxims sanctioned by experience, the
'course of Government would be continually exposed
'to the dangers arising from the ebullition of tempo-
'rary passions, to the shocks of incessant experiment,
'and to the projects of visionary speculation. . . .
'Government would be a fluctuating and uncertain
'establishment, balanced by no stock of embodied
'wisdom—directed by no certain landmarks—obedient
'to no steady principle of action. To a Government
'so abandoned by all experience, and resigned to

'every conflict of passion, would apply the words of 'the poet in his description of winter—

> "A leafless branch her sceptre, and her throne
> "An icy car, indebted to no wheels—
> "But urged by storms along its slippery way!"'

The opposition to the legislative Union between the two countries was as fruitless as that to the other ministerial measures, and it soon passed into a law. But in this, perhaps the only matter for regret is that it was unaccompanied by that great act of justice to the Catholics, the hope at least of which had certainly been held out by Mr. Pitt. And thirty years later, when that act of justice had at length been tardily and ungraciously performed, my father, as Minister, gave his most strenuous opposition to the mischievous agitation excited and kept up by Mr. O'Connell with a view to the repeal of the Union which had been thus effected.

Constant evidence will be found in the course of this memoir of the deep interest which my father took throughout life in the affairs of Ireland, and of the repeated sacrifices he made (if, indeed, the abandonment of all hope of power could ever be considered in his case a sacrifice) to obtain the extension to that country of an equality of civil and religious rights. At present it will suffice to mention that he had already given practical proof of this disposition during the Administration of Mr. Pitt. The following extract of a

letter to Mrs. Ponsonby, written in 1796, shows that an overture of some sort had already been made to him on the part of the Government, and that he had refused it, chiefly on account of Ireland.

'It is certainly true,' he writes, 'that overtures were 'made to me when I was in London, which I rejected. 'I cannot write an account of all that passed. I will 'only say that one principal cause of my not agreeing 'with them was their refusal to remove the present 'Irish Ministers, though they gave me every possible 'assurance of adopting all the measures in that country, 'short of Parliamentary Reform and Catholic Eman- 'cipation, that I could have wished.'

It is painful to reflect upon the return he met with in after years from that party in Ireland, for which he had done so much!

CHAPTER II.

1801 TO 1806.

FROM THE FORMATION OF MR. ADDINGTON'S ADMINISTRATION IN 1801, TO MR. PITT'S DEATH IN JANUARY 1806.

SHORTLY after the opening of Parliament in 1801, Mr. Pitt, finding insuperable objections on the part of the King to that measure for the relief of the Roman Catholics which he had contemplated as an essential accompaniment to the Act of Union, and which, it is believed, the Catholics had been led to expect as its just consequence, resigned office; and was succeeded, at the head of the Treasury and of the Government, by Mr. Addington.

This change, however, made little immediate difference in the relative position of parties in the House of Commons, and the Whigs under Mr. Fox continued in the same fruitless opposition to the new Government which they had offered to the old. Before Mr. Pitt's resignation, my father had moved an amendment to the address in answer to the King's speech, asking the House to pledge itself to an inquiry into the state of the nation. He had subsequently given notice of his intention to move for the appointment of a committee which should be charged with such an inquiry, nor did he see any reason, in consequence of the change, to alter that intention, or to postpone his

motion. He accordingly brought it forward on the 25th of March. 'The new Administration,' he said, 'acting, professedly, on the principles of the old, 'he could not have much confidence in them; and he 'called upon those who believed that the system pur-'sued by the old Ministers, and to be adopted by the 'new, was subversive of all that is venerable in the 'British constitution,' . . 'to renounce a system of 'blind confidence, and accede to a motion the object 'of which is constitutional inquiry.'

But the opposition to the Administration of Mr. Addington proved equally unavailing with that so long offered in vain to the measures of Mr. Pitt. And notwithstanding all the efforts of the Whig party, the new Ministers were supported by large majorities, in the coercive policy which, instead of that great measure of conciliation that had been hoped for as the consequence of the Union, was now adopted towards Ireland. Bills were passed for proclaiming martial law in that country under certain circumstances,—for suspending the Habeas Corpus Act,—and for indemnifying those who had been engaged in the arrest or detention of suspected persons.

I must here notice two events which occurred in the course of 1801; though they belong perhaps more properly to the narrative of my father's private life; for they were events which exercised a material influence on his future political career.

One was the acceptance by his father of a peerage from Mr. Addington, without his previous knowledge,

and against his known wishes, as being himself in direct and avowed opposition to the Government of which Mr. Addington was at the head.

The other was the arrangement with his uncle, Sir Harry, by which Howick became for the future his permanent residence in the country.

The former event, as rendering his removal from the House of Commons inevitable, and that, probably, at no very distant period, can only be regarded as a misfortune to the country; for in the House of Commons alone could any hope exist of an effectual check being given to the pernicious system of Government which so long prevailed: while the latter event, fixing him at a distance from London, which, though now easily performed between breakfast and dinner, it took at that time four long days to accomplish, made it impossible for him to give that constant attention to the proceedings of the party, which subsequent events proved to be so necessary. His presence in the House on any sudden emergency was put out of the question; and even his regular attendance on the ordinary business of the session, became every year shorter and more uncertain. His correspondence with Mr. Fox at this time, is filled, on one side, with entreaties for his presence, and regrets at the distance which separated them; on the other, with repeated pleas and excuses to justify his continued absence.

Indeed, all his letters at this period, speak of his ardent desire to withdraw entirely from politics; and writing to Mr. Fox in December 1802, in answer to a

pressing entreaty that he would come to London in consequence of the critical state of our relations with France, he declares his determination 'never again to 'take anything like a lead in politics.' And when Mr. Fox, in combating such a resolution, urges him to consider that if he perseveres in it, 'all hope of any 'good in the country, nay, of any alleviation of evil, 'or any check to the career of despotism, is at an end' —he repeats: 'I have formed a juster estimate of 'myself than your partiality has done, and I know 'that it is in my power to do little good—non tali 'auxilio. If the career of despotism is to be checked, 'it must be by a more powerful hand than I can 'oppose to it.' . . 'Indeed, if you consider the matter 'impartially, I am persuaded you will think my de-'cision such a one as a proper examination of myself, 'and of the situation of public affairs, ought to 'dictate.'

It is possible that in announcing such a determination, and in the unwillingness he showed to attend Parliament, he may have been, in some degree, influenced by the feeling that, on the question of our relations with France, his opinions were not in entire accordance with those of Mr. Fox. He had taken no part (having been at Howick at the time it occurred) in the debate on the terms of the preliminary treaty signed in October 1801. But if we may infer his opinion from that which he afterwards expressed, when events had led, towards the end of 1802, to the well-founded fear that, though the definitive treaty had

only been signed on the 28th of the preceding March, a fresh rupture was imminent, it would appear that he did not materially differ from those who thought the terms of peace scarcely compatible with the honour of the country.*

In the difficulties which had arisen since the conclusion of peace, Mr. Fox, asserting his belief that France was in the right, and that, if hostilities were resumed, the fault lay with our Government, and believing that Mr. Addington was likely to be forced into war, against his will, by 'the goadings of the War Party,' was rather disposed to support him against that party.

My father, whatever his opinion of the peace itself might be, though equally desirous as Mr. Fox of preserving it, if it could be maintained with honour—did not see the necessity of supporting Mr. Addington with such an object, so strongly. In the first place he could not help thinking the conduct of the French Government 'wantonly offensive' to this country. 'I 'confess,' he writes to Mr. Fox in December 1802, 'that everything I have learnt from those sources of 'public information which alone are open to me, both

* See letter of December 1802, quoted in the next page, and particularly what is there said of 'Switzerland, Italy, and Germany too,' being all 'left at the mercy of Bonaparte.' See also what is said in the same letter of 'making us drink the cup of our disgrace to the very dregs,' &c.

Mr. Windham called it a peace 'glorious for France;' and he said he could not join in the general rejoicing; because he feared many years would not elapse before it would be turned into repentance and bitter sorrow.

Mr. Sheridan said it was a peace, of which every man ought to be glad, but no man would be proud.

'during the negotiation, and since the conclusion of 'peace, seems to me to evince a disposition in the 'Chief Consul, very unfavourable to such an opinion' (Mr. Fox had expressed his opinion that Bonaparte was really desirous of peace). 'I do not mean to 'contend that by any of those open and undisguised 'acts of ambition by which he has annexed new 'dominions to France, either the letter of the treaty 'of Amiens is violated, or that the power of that 'country is, in fact, extended. Italy, Switzerland, 'and Germany too, were all left at his mercy. But 'there may be a way of using power, so threatening 'and so insulting, as, at last, even under the most 'disadvantageous circumstances, to force resistance; 'and he appears to me to be determined to make us 'drink the cup of our disgrace to the very dregs; to 'omit no opportunity of studied aggravation and 'insult, and to push us, point by point, till at last we 'shall be compelled to take some measures which may 'give him a pretext for the hostilities which he medi-'tates.' Nor would my father go the length of saying with Mr. Fox that the acts by which France had given evidence of her hostile dispositions, would not be just causes of war. 'I think Switzerland,' he writes, 'certainly would.' All he said was, that he did not think 'all or any of them came so near us, as 'to make war *necessary*.' Again he asks: 'Do you 'think there is nothing offensive to England in Bona-'parte's speech to the Swiss deputies? "You must

'have no treaty with England." I do not know that 'it is our interest to have any; but surely to be 'publicly tabooed in this manner, is, if we are not in 'a condition to resent it, most degrading to us as a 'nation.' . . 'Then the cession of the Floridas' (to the 'United States of America), 'of which I hear there is 'no doubt, is another subject of just complaint on the 'part of this country. I dread a renewal of the war 'as the greatest calamity; but are there to be no 'limits to our submission?'

In fact the feelings of dislike with which my father had viewed the earlier proceedings of the revolutionary Government in France, had not been removed by what had occurred since the advent of Bonaparte to power. 'I rather envy you,' he writes to Mr. Fox, on the return of the latter from the visit which he had made to Paris during the peace of Amiens. 'I rather 'envy you having seen all the wonders of Paris, 'though my hatred to the Government would, I 'believe, even if I were at liberty, prevent my going 'there. Perhaps you will think me very foolish, but 'I certainly never felt a stronger indignation against 'the principles of the coalition against France, than I 'do against those of the Consular Government.'

In the next place he did not think that Mr. Addington's Government, which appeared to him to take every opportunity of courting Mr. Pitt and the Grenvilles at the expence of Mr. Fox's party, had any claim upon their support; and, above all, he had

serious doubts whether, were this otherwise, their avowed support would not, in the interests of peace itself, be rather a disadvantage than an assistance. 'Are you sure,' he asks, 'that *our* interference will 'be very conducive to the preservation of peace? 'There has appeared to me, in all the debates, a 'readiness to seize upon every argument and expression 'of yours, to renew the old controversy of last war.'

Concurring, however, with Mr. Fox, that they should support 'any measures which may have for 'their object peace on honourable terms,' he further cautions him strongly against showing any appearance 'of indifference to the power—still more of anything 'like approbation of the measures, of the French 'Government.' 'I know,' he adds, 'that when peace 'is the object, topics of irritation ought not to be 'dwelt upon; but I doubt much whether a total 'avoidance of all subjects of this nature would be 'either right or politic. In the latter view it un-'doubtedly affords additional matter of aggravation, 'which has been but too often successfully used by 'those who wish to mislead and inflame the country.'

When on the 8th of March 1803, the King's message to the two Houses of Parliament, informing them that 'in consequence of the military preparations in the 'ports of France and Holland, and as discussions were 'now subsisting between His Majesty and the French 'Government, he had thought it necessary to take 'additional precautions for the security of his domi-

'nions;'—when this state of affairs had made Mr. Fox still more pressing for my father's attendance, he at last reluctantly consented to leave the North; but before doing so, he once more urged upon Mr. Fox the necessity of great caution in his language. 'The more I 'think,' he writes on the 19th March, 'the more con-'vinced I am that, however desirous we may be of 'peace, we ought not to show ourselves backward in 'offering to support the most vigorous exertions for 'the prosecution of the war. Of course, while things 'remain undetermined, if the subject should come to 'be debated in such a shape as should afford us a hope 'that we might, by moderate counsels, contribute to 'the preservation of peace, I should be as much in-'clined as you to adopt that line. But I hardly think 'such a chance will be left to us; and after all that 'has passed, at the same time that I would avoid most 'decidedly all those foolish tirades* which, however 'magnificently they sound, add nothing to the real 'vigour of our measures, and serve no purpose but 'that of irritation, I think we should take care to 'obviate the charge (a most unjust one it has hitherto 'been), that we were insensible to the honour of the 'country, and always disposed to underrate or to pal-'liate the aggressions of France.' . . . 'Let us always 'remember,' he adds, 'that the cause of peace must

* He alludes here to a speech of Mr. Sheridan's, on 8th December 1802, in favour of war, which was much cried up at the time by the War Party.

'suffer, if the real friends of peace are run down by 'the effect of misrepresentation.'

The discussions between the two Governments were still proceeding on my father's arrival in London, nor were all hopes of peace abandoned for some weeks later. The negotiations continued throughout the month of April, the speculations and opinions as to the result varying from day to day. Even as late as the 7th of May my father writes: "I have seen a note 'from Andreossi,* in which he says, "Il y a encore 'quelque lueur d'espérance."' These hopes, however, proved delusive. On the 12th of May, Lord Whitworth left Paris, and on the 16th, a message from the King announced the termination of diplomatic intercourse with France. 'I am here in a full house,' my father writes on that day, 'waiting in expectation of a 'message from the King to put an end to all our 'hopes. Lord Whitworth slept at Boulogne last 'night, and Andreossi left town at five this morning. 'Oh! that it were as easy to make peace as war!' And the next day he continues,—'You will see in 'the papers of to-day, the melancholy confirmation of 'the news I sent you yesterday. We are now actu-'ally at war, and we can only say, God send us a safe 'deliverance, which, under such Ministers, can hardly 'be hoped. Hawkesbury, in moving to have the 'King's message taken into consideration on Monday 'next, was absolutely convulsed with fear, and could 'hardly articulate from the violence of his agitation;

* French Ambassador in London, at that time.

'and to make the thing quite ridiculous, Addington 'appeared in the full dress of the Windsor uniform, 'and strutted up the house in the midst of a burst of 'laughter, just as the Speaker was reading the Medi- 'cine Act a second time. Pitt went down to take his 'seat but was too late. He certainly attends upon 'the debate, and will, I believe, as certainly support 'the war.'

On the 18th, a formal declaration was made of the causes which had led to a resumption of hostilities, and on the 23rd the subject came under discussion in the House of Commons. On that day Lord Hawkesbury moved an Address to assure the King of their sense of his uniform efforts to preserve peace;—of their confidence in his disposition again to terminate the calamities of war;—of their indignation against France, &c.; and of their firm determination to give His Majesty their best support in the contest in which he was thus involved.

To this my father moved an amendment, which equally assured the King of their determination to afford him their vigorous support and co-operation, but expressed in stronger terms the satisfaction it would give them to see peace restored, and omitted whatever might appear like approbation of the past conduct of Ministers. 'The debate was adjourned last night,' he writes the next morning. 'Pitt made one of the most 'inflammatory speeches that ever was heard, and has 'plunged the country into another war of ten years. 'I answered him, and under all the disadvantages of

'speaking to a house preoccupied and inflamed by 'one of the most magnificent pieces of declamation 'that ever was made. I got through it, however, tant 'bien que mal, and ended by moving an amendment, 'merely to say that we would support the war in 'which we are engaged, and holding out the hope and 'desire of peace. My reason for moving an amend-'ment was, that I could not consent to the original 'Address, which implied an approbation of the en-'deavours of Ministers to preserve peace, and asserted 'the war to be unavoidable without sufficient infor-'mation.' In fact, the perusal of the papers laid before Parliament had convinced my father that, however justly we might resent the conduct of France, as 'wantonly offensive' to this country; and though some of our grounds of complaint might possibly justify even a declaration of war; it was very much owing to the conduct of our own Government, that affairs had been brought into a position in which war had become unavoidable. 'Upon reading the papers,' he had written on the 19th of May, 'I am completely 'convinced that it would have been very easy for men 'of any ability, and desirous of peace, to have pre-'served it.' And again he says, in still stronger language, 'I have a satisfaction in having joined with 'Fox in an endeavour to stop a war which I believe 'to be the most unnecessary of any in which this 'country ever engaged.'

This opinion that the renewal of the war might have been avoided, had our Government been so disposed,

has since been adopted by our latest Tory historians. Sir A. Alison says in his history: 'Upon coolly re-'viewing the circumstances under which the contest 'was renewed, it is impossible to deny that the British 'Government manifested a feverish anxiety to come 'to a rupture; and that so far as the transactions be-'tween the two countries are concerned, they were 'the aggressors.'

In moving his amendment, however, it is certain, though my father's speech is not reported,* that it was quite in the spirit which he had always recommended to Mr. Fox; for, till after Mr. Fox had spoken, the amendment was only objected to as interfering unnecessarily with the unanimity which it was so desirable to preserve on this occasion,—Mr. Thomas Grenville declaring that it did not contain a word in which he did not cordially agree, and Lord Hawksbury adding that it was the same, in fact, as the original address.

But when Mr. Fox, on the second night of the debate, in a speech which my father described as 'the 'most wonderful display of wisdom and genius,' before which 'everything else shrinks into dust,' had been led, in his ardent love of peace, into a vehement denunciation of the conduct of those to whom, much more than to the French Government, he attributed the annihilation of all hope of its being preserved, the language of Government and of their supporters

* The reporters, my father says, had been excluded from the gallery, by a new regulation of the Speaker's.

at once changed. Mr. Fox was immmediately assailed, as my father had warned him he would be, with all the hacknied accusations with which it was the custom at that time to endeavour to silence the advocates for peace. Want of patriotism, insensibility to his country's honour, &c., were imputed to him; his speech was even denounced by Mr. Windham for its *wickedness;* and the amendment was rejected in a full House by the enormous majority of 398 to 67.

The die was now cast. War was once more a stern reality. A war, too, that was to endure, with no relaxation or intermission, for nearly twelve long years! My father had done his best to assist Mr. Fox in his efforts to keep the country out of it; but, true to the principles he had ever professed, once engaged, his sole desire was that it should be vigorously conducted; as thus alone could any hope be entertained of seeing it brought to a satisfactory conclusion.

Of this there appeared little probability, under an Administration so incompetent, and so low in public estimation, as that of Mr. Addington. And the state of parties in Parliament, and the possibility of union with one or other of them, without which it seemed impossible to form a Cabinet either equal to the existing emergency, or sufficiently strong in Parliamentary support to give it a chance of permanence, became a subject of anxious consideration and of frequent discussion between Mr. Fox and my father.

The question of some such union had indeed been raised almost from the commencement of Mr. Adding-

ton's Government. At first it was scarcely believed that the change of Administration in 1801 was a bonâ fide one, and Mr. Pitt's early resumption of power was confidently speculated upon. The belief was that there was an understanding between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Addington, and that the latter merely held the post of Premier until it should suit the former to resume it. But when it became clear that there was no such understanding, it was as confidently expected that Mr. Addington would seek to strengthen himself from the Whig ranks; and it was thought that a junction with that party would be much facilitated by the commencement of negotiations for peace, and by Mr. Addington's supposed anxiety to conclude it.

Some attempt at negotiation, with such a view, seems to have been made towards the end of 1801, in the hope of obtaining the accession of my father and others of the Whig party to the Government. Mr. Fox, in answer to a question from Mr. Wyvill, a Yorkshire member of Parliament, and a staunch Whig and reformer, who appears to have heard reports of such a treaty, and to have expressed the fear that it might lead to the abandonment of Reform, thus writes:—'It is true that Mr. Grey, at the 'request of persons for whom he has the greatest 'deference, had some communication with a member 'of the present Government; but to say the treaty 'was broken off is not so correct a description of the 'transaction, as to say that what passed in that con-'versation did not afford any ground for any negotia-

'tion whatever. It would, on many accounts, be 'improper to enter into any particulars, further than 'to express my entire confidence that Grey never will, 'nor never can, either upon the subject of Reform, or 'on any other, act otherwise than is consistent with 'his own honour and the good of the country.'

Whatever the proposal may have been (and no mention is made of it in any of the contemporary histories or memoirs that I know of), my father, in writing to Mr. Fox in December 1802, speaks of its failure as the 'happiest escape' he had ever had in his life;—and he adds (the Duke of Bedford, who, it appears, was to have had a principal share in the arrangement having died in the mean time*), 'Even 'if the Duke of Bedford were living, I would not 'embark upon the terms which were proposed last 'year; now, no earthly consideration should induce 'me to do so.' And again in April 1803, when the rupture of the negotiations with France was hourly expected, having received an intimation through his father, who supported Mr. Addington's Government, that 'overtures would probably be made to him by 'Addington, in consequence of the failure of the 'negotiations with Pitt,' he repeats: 'I have an- 'swered, stating my belief that no overtures would be 'made, and, if any, none that I could accept; that I 'have no reason to believe the Ministers would offer 'better terms now than they did a year and a half 'ago; and that I should feel myself compelled by the

* Francis Duke of Bedford, died 2nd March, 1802.

'circumstances of the present moment to insist upon 'a great deal more. In short, that I would not 'negotiate on any ground but that of having a ma- 'jority in the Cabinet, Fox being one. This deter- 'mination nothing can alter.'

It would seem from the concluding sentence above quoted, that whatever the arrangement proposed in 1801 was to have been, Mr. Fox, probably in reference to the King's prejudices, was to have had no personal share in it; and if this were so, it is quite certain that in consenting 'at the request of persons 'for whom he had the greatest deference,' to listen at all to such overtures, my father must have acted by the direct advice, and in obedience to the express wishes, of Mr. Fox himself. Nothing less could have induced him to give even this momentary consent to a principle of exclusion which he ever after stoutly resisted, and to which, as will be seen, not even the authority of Mr. Fox himself could again persuade him to submit.

But, in truth, all my father's own feelings and opinions were strongly opposed to any scheme of junction with Mr. Addington and his party, of whose abilities, as public men, he had the most contemptible opinion. 'As to Addington and his associates,' he writes to Mr. Fox, in March 1803, 'you know what 'I think. Nothing could induce me to subscribe even 'to an apparent toleration of them, but the fear that 'by joining in the cry against them, we might assist 'those whose politics are for war. But when war has 'actually taken place, this danger ceases; and how-

'ever strange it may appear, I should have a better 'hope of peace even from Grenville, than from the 'present Ministry. An imbecility under which there 'could be no hope that the resources of the country 'could be well managed, and which must excite the 'contempt of the enemy, would not only add to the 'immediate danger of the contest, but to the proba-'bility of its continuance.'

But he was at this time generally averse to *any* coalition. He thought highly of the Grenville party, as containing men of 'vigour and ability,' moved too, 'by a principle which while you are acting with them 'makes them more to be depended on.' Still, they had been members of Mr. Pitt's Government, and had, as such, been identified with that system at home, and that policy abroad, to which Mr. Fox and his party had so strenuously objected. 'I have not considered,' my father had already written to Mr. Fox, in December 1802, 'the possibility of joining the Grenvilles. I 'agree with you in preferring the men; but the line 'they have taken puts it quite out of the question, 'and what may happen when they have purified them-'selves by a long opposition is hardly worth consider-'ing.' Again, in April 1803,* when the renewal of the war was imminent, and when he felt, as expressed in one of the letters already quoted, that there was a better hope of peace from them than from the Adding-

* See in 'Diaries and Correspondence of the Right Honourable George Rose,' an account of the negotiations that took place at the beginning of this month between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Addington, vol. ii., p. 30 *et seq.*

ton ministry, he had strong doubts of the propriety of an avowed coalition with them. 'In the event of a 'war,' he writes, in answer to some remarks of Mr. Fox on this subject, 'as the country never was ex-'posed to so great a danger, there never was a time 'which required so much the sacrifice of all past 'injuries for the sake of the public defence.' Still, feeling this, and admitting that 'unions of parties 'have often been called for,' he adds that, 'the effect 'of such calls has not been very encouraging;' and expresses his fear, that 'an union amongst those 'who have had apparently fundamental and irrecon-'cileable differences,' could not, under any circumstances, be 'exempt from a suspicion which would 'defeat its object.' At the same time, he observes that, 'in the common danger which threatens us, it 'would be right for us to avoid, as much as we can, all 'reference to past disputes.' . . . 'The existence 'of such a Ministry as the present is surely, in such cir-'cumstances, a national evil; and without any violence 'of manner towards them, I should be inclined, in the 'event of a war (and, indeed, in the event of a peace, if 'it could be done without the danger of a war), to join 'with those who call for an Administration which 'might afford a better hope to the country.'

As time went on, and the incapacity of Ministers became daily more apparent, the different parties in the House of Commons, which disapproved equally of their measures, were naturally brought into more direct co-operation; and writing to Mr. Fox, in

October 1803, my father expressed his opinion, that it would be right 'to smooth the way as much as 'possible for co-operation with those whose sentiments 'are the same as ours, as without some such union 'nothing useful can be hoped for.' Still the difficulties attending an avowed coalition with men to whom they had been so long opposed, were not, in his mind, to be lightly put on one side; and in December 1803, he again writes: 'Of my general disposition and opinions 'about unions you are already sufficiently informed. 'The measures of Government have given very 'general disgust, and their characters are despised. 'But then, on the other hand, the Grenvilles, and 'Windham still more, are very unpopular. While 'Pitt keeps away, their numbers will be small; and 'the general dislike to them will have its full weight, 'so that I see no chance of any good being done.' Even in January 1804, when Mr. Fox writes to announce 'that he had had a direct communication '(wholly unsought by him) from that part of the 'Opposition which sits at the Bar end of the House,* 'to the following effect: that it is their wish to join 'us in a systematic opposition for the purpose of removing the Ministry, and of substituting one on the 'broadest possible basis,' and adding that 'there was 'an openness and appearance of cordiality in the

* Seceders from a Ministry, or men who, though generally opposed to the Government, do not belong to the party in direct and avowed opposition, usually sit together below the gangway, or passage that leads on either side of the House, from the floor to the back benches. Seceders from Government generally sit below the gangway on the Ministerial side. But this does not by any means soften the asperity of their attacks.

'manner of making the proposal that much pleases 'me;—even this direct proposal, coming from men of whose vigour and ability, and of whose principle of action in party warfare, my father had, on various occasions, expressed a favourable opinion, could not at once reconcile him to the proposed step. He writes in answer: 'When I have considered that 'alone we can do little good, and have examined the 'different parties with which it might be possible to 'form a junction, I have always thought that of the 'Grenvilles the most eligible. Yet now that the pro- 'posal comes directly from them, and it is necessary 'to say aye or no, I doubt and fear.

'They certainly are able men; their conduct is 'direct and open; we agree with them in opinion, both 'as to the character and the measures of the present 'Administration; and the overture which they have 'made appears, from what you say, well calculated to 'inspire confidence. But on the other hand their oppo- 'sition has appeared to proceed rather from personal 'disappointment than from public principle. . . I say 'nothing of personal attacks. These I am as much 'disposed to forget as any one. But is it for our own 'honour—at once, upon the very first proposal—to 'declare ourselves their humble servants? Is there, 'from our doing so, a fair chance of advantage to the 'public? It is upon the answer to the second ques- 'tion that the importance of the first seems to depend. 'For though I think there is something like the same 'principle of honour to which we must bend in private

'life, to be observed in our public conduct, which 'might give to a too easy forgiveness of personal in- 'jury or insult the appearance of interest or meanness, 'I would by no means allow this to stand in the way 'of a great and evident public good.'

He doubted, also (and in this opinion he was borne out by the result of the different divisions in the House of Commons during the contest of the succeeding April, when Mr. Addington, up to the very moment of his 'running away,' as it was termed by Mr. Fox, had a majority over all the parties combined in opposition, including Mr. Pitt)—he doubted whether the union now proposed between the Whigs and the Grenvilles would do more than form 'at best what would be called a 'strong opposition.' And as one of the conditions of the proposals was that both Mr. Fox and himself should give a constant attendance in Parliament, and systematic opposition to the Government—'to engage in a 'long siege of the sort,' the probable success of which was at all events distant, was more than he felt inclined to promise. He counselled, therefore, a civil answer: 'expressing a general inclination to support '—promising it on certain occasions—but declining a 'regular and systematic attendance.' Even this advice he qualifies before the letter in which it was contained was despatched. In a postscript written the following morning he adds, 'A night's reflection has 'not relieved my doubts. I still fear that an avowed 'coalition with the Grenvilles for the purpose of over-

'turning the Ministers would be ill received by the 'public; and to give it the strongest effect, if it 'should ultimately take place, it will be better to 'enter into no engagement at present, except to sup- 'port them on the Volunteer business; both sides being 'at liberty to act as the result of that may render ex- 'pedient.'

This advice prevailed, and the different parties in Opposition continued, according to the expression of Mr. Windham, to move in 'separate columns.' Their co-operation, however, as the fight proceeded, became more and more direct; and the various motions brought forward by them against the Government were so framed as to obtain the combined support of all. Even Mr. Pitt, who had hitherto, for the most part, held himself aloof, entered actively into the opposition to the Government, and opened a direct communication with Mr. Fox, through Lord Granville Leveson, afterwards Lord Granville.

But the co-operation of Mr. Pitt was only intended to be given while the parties were acting in opposition, or till the victory was won. Should they succeed in displacing Mr. Addington, it did not necessarily enter into his speculations that he should share office with those by whose assistance that object might have been accomplished. 'If called upon to form a Govern- 'ment without them, . . . he would be ready,' he writes to Lord Melville, on the 29th March, 'to do 'so as well as he could amongst his own immediate

'friends, united with the most capable and unexcep-
'tionable persons of the present Government.'*

That this was, in fact, Mr. Pitt's object, my father had all along been convinced. As far back as the 7th April 1803, he had written to my mother, 'All the 'reports of changes will, I believe, end in nothing but 'the removal of ——. If any more extensive one 'happens, it will be for the introduction of Pitt; for 'as to *us*, I hold that no change can bring us into 'power.' And on the 20th of May following, he says: 'I think I now understand the game that Pitt 'is playing, which, if I am right, is a very double one. 'I believe that he secretly does not discourage the 'violence of his young friends against Addington, 'who, with the Grenvilles, after the debate on the 'King's message, will make a series of attacks upon 'him. In that debate he builds upon our moving some 'amendment in favour of peace, of which he will take 'advantage to make a speech to maintain the honour, 'and excite the spirit of the country, and concur in 'the original address, and afterwards again absent 'himself. By these means he may hope, at the same 'time that the present Administration is weakened by 'different modes of attack from the different sides of 'Opposition, to recommend himself both to the King 'and to the country by his apparent forbearance and 'disinterestedness.'† In March 1804, when, as has

* See Letters printed for private circulation by Lord Stanhope.
† See Lord Malmesbury's Diary; which shows that Lord Malmesbury,

been seen, the opposition to the Government had taken a more decided form, he repeats a similar opinion in still stronger language; but as the conviction in 1803, of the advantage which Mr. Pitt was prepared to take of any amendment moved by him (a conviction that was entirely justified by the result), could not prevent my father on that occasion from doing what he considered right, so the equally strong conviction in 1804, that the defeat of the Government would lead merely to the reinstatement of Mr. Pitt in office, without any of those by whose co-operation that defeat might be effected, could not deter him from giving his best assistance in bringing about what he deemed essential to the safety of the country. And though again expressing his conviction, in writing to Mr. Fox on the 22nd of April, when the contest was at its height, that it would all end 'either in the con-'tinuance, under certain conditions, of the Addington 'Government . . . or in Pitt's forming his Administra-'tion without you.' He adds: 'This does not alter my 'opinion of the propriety of perseverance in the opposi-'tion you have begun, though I wish the event may 'not exemplify the old fable of the Log and the Stork.'

Mr. Fox answered, that he could not concur in the 'danger of getting anything worse than King Log. I 'do not think,' he says, 'the Stork (which, by the 'way, is Pitt's crest) would be worse, for reasons 'which we may discuss when we meet.'

though a constant supporter of Mr. Pitt, had not formed a very different or more flattering opinion of Mr. Pitt's conduct and motives in these transactions.

But my father himself took no personal part in the parliamentary warfare which ended in the abandonment of the Government by Mr. Addington. Though pressed by almost daily letters from Mr. Fox to come to town, and though cordially approving all that was done by him, he had been unavoidably detained in the North, and when he at last arrived in London on the 1st of May, the fight was already over. Mr. Addington had, as Mr. Fox expressed it in one of his letters, 'run away.' And indeed the resignation of the Minister seems to have been rightly characterized by this expression; for though his last majority in the House of Commons before that event, had been only thirty-six in a full house (considered a very small one in those days), and though he was threatened with an effective attack in the House of Lords in the shape of a motion for inquiry into the state of the nation; yet there can be little doubt that, if he had possessed nerve to continue the contest, supported as he was by the Court, Mr. Addington might have successfully defied the combined opposition of Mr. Fox, Mr. Pitt, and the friends of Lord Grenville. 'It seems to me,' —my father writes to my mother from the road, on his way up,—'it seems to me as if the Doctor was determined to fight it out, and if he can really screw his courage to the sticking-place, I shall not be very much surprised if he withstands the combination against him, powerful as it is.' Such was also believed to have been the opinion of Lord St. Vincent, and one or two of the more energetic members of the Govern-

ment,* and their advice was said to be in accordance with that opinion.

But there were traitors in the camp. It is now known that at the very height of the contest, while the attacks upon the Government of which he was a member were in their full vigour, Lord Eldon was in secret communication with Mr. Pitt!—that before the motion made by Mr. Fox on the 23rd of April, and which was strongly supported by him, (drawn up and agreed upon, indeed, in previous concert with him,) Mr. Pitt had, through Lord Eldon, written a letter to the King, the object of which was to urge the necessity of a change of Government, and to place himself (Mr. Pitt) at the absolute disposal of His Majesty: the only peremptory condition of the change being, as appears from the letter to Lord Melville already quoted, the dismissal of Mr. Addington and Lord St. Vincent, and his own appointment to the place of the former!

Mr. Fox's motion had originally been fixed for Friday the 20th, but had been postponed, Mr. Fox writes, 'at the earnest request of Mr. Pitt, for reasons, 'foolish and fanciful beyond belief, till Monday the '23rd.' But the 'fanciful' reasons given to Mr. Fox do not appear to have been the true ones. Mr. Pitt, in charging Lord Eldon on the 22nd with his letter to the King, writes that he 'certainly feels *most anxious*

* Mr. Addington himself is supposed to have been influenced, in abandoning the contest, by the state of the King's mind, though it does not appear how this was to operate more strongly to prevent his continuing the Government, than any one else from undertaking it. The term 'running away,' seems to me, therefore, properly applied.

'that this letter should be put into His Majesty's 'hands, if it can with propriety, *before the discussion of* '*to-morrow*.'

In a second note of the same date he adds: 'My 'wish is to leave it entirely to your discretion whether 'it can be delivered before the debate to-morrow. 'If not, I *anxiously wish that it should be known to His* '*Majesty, in due time*, that it was deposited with you 'in order that it should be so delivered,' &c.

It may be well doubted whether in all the annals of Parliamentary and Party contests, an equal instance can be found of treachery on both sides.

My father, as has been seen, foresaw from the first that any change in the Administration would in all probability be limited to the extent above mentioned. He again expresses the same opinion on the day of his arrival in London (May 5): 'The most probable 'event,' he writes, 'is that the new Ministry will be 'formed without us.' And before the issue of Mr. Pitt's interview with the King, on the 7th of May, was known, he again states his belief, that 'it will 'end in Pitt's coming in without any of us.'

This speculation was fully confirmed by the event. After pressing, more or less strongly, upon the King, the necessity of a junction with Mr. Fox, Mr. Pitt yielded to His Majesty's objections; and, failing to induce Lord Grenville to concur in the same course, formed his Administration out of the members of the late Government, with the mere addition of two or three of his own personal friends.

A faint disposition had been shown to offer office to my father and others of Mr. Fox's party, but to the exclusion of Mr. Fox himself; but to such a proposal my father would not listen for a single moment, and he took steps, on the first rumour of such an intention, which prevented the proposition being actually made. 'The objection,' he writes, 'being personal to him, 'Fox expressed a wish that his friends, if they could 'be admitted as a party to their full share of influence 'and power, and rather more than if he himself formed 'part of the arrangement, should accept; and Pitt 'seemed inclined to discuss this proposition in a per-'sonal interview with Fox. But I put an absolute 'veto upon it, and we are all excluded.' And in another letter after mentioning that Mr. Fox was the *only* person objected to, he proceeds: 'If by stating 'Fox to be the only person objected to, they mean 'that the King would accept of me or any other of 'Fox's friends, and that they have hopes of gaining 'us, they are, as far as relates to me at least, com-'pletely mistaken. No earthly consideration should 'make me accept office without Fox. How unceasing 'the persecution of him is! How honourable to him-'self—how disgraceful to all those who concur in, or 'submit to it!' The disgrace of such submission did not attach to the Grenville party. 'The Grenvilles,' my father writes, 'have also refused, and have indeed 'behaved in the most honourable manner, so that Pitt 'must make up his Ministry out of the rump of the 'old Administration, and his own immediate friends.'

These friends, however, seem themselves to have been dissatisfied with this result. Lord Malmesbury in his 'Diaries,' says that Mr. 'Canning's leanings 'were entirely with Fox and the Grenvilles, and that he 'was disposed to think *Pitt might have done more with* 'the King.' He further says that Mr. Canning had told him that he did not 'conceal from Pitt his 'concern and *dissatisfaction*, and even *disapprobation* of 'what had passed—that he considered the great and 'only opportunity of uniting the whole ability of the 'country gone by and lost.'

Whether or not the loss of this opportunity is to be imputed to Mr. Pitt,—whether or not he was sincere in his desire to overcome the King's objection to Mr. Fox,—are questions which every one must decide for himself. There seem to me, however, to be strong reasons for concurring in the opinion which Lord Malmesbury tells us that Mr. Canning expressed to him: that 'Pitt might have done more with the King,' and for believing that the will was wanting.

In 1852 Lord Stanhope (then Lord Mahon) printed for private circulation certain correspondence between Mr. Pitt and Lord Melville on the state of the Administration at the beginning of 1804. Firmly impressed, as he states himself to be with the conviction that every week for which the existence of Mr. Addington's Government might be protracted, would be attended with increased danger to the country, Mr. Pitt avows his intention of 'endeavouring by par-

'liamentary means' to effect a change. With this view he proposed to write to the King to explain the dangers which, in his opinion, threatened both his crown and people from the continuance of the existing Government, and to urge upon His Majesty the necessity of a change which should result in the formation of a Government of 'a strong and comprehensive 'nature.' But he adds that various considerations, and especially the King's last illness, induce him to 'feel 'that a proposal to take into a share of his counsels 'persons against whom he has long entertained such 'strong and natural objections, ought never to be 'made to him, *but in such a manner as to leave him a 'free option, and to convince him that if he cannot be 'sincerely convinced of its expediency, there is not a wish 'to force it upon him.*' He adds that, from his knowledge of the King's character, he thinks this would be the most likely method to obtain his consent to the formation of a strong Government; and then proceeds to say that, having taken this step, whatever might be the result, he (Mr. Pitt) would have acquitted himself of his duty to the King; and if it produces no effect, '*I should then*,' he adds, '*have no hesitation in taking 'such ground in Parliament as would be most likely to 'attain the object.*'

What is the plain English of this, but that if the King persisted in supporting Mr. Addington's Government, and in excluding Mr. Pitt, he was to be forced, if possible, by Parliamentary attacks, into accepting the latter as his Minister; but, having con-

sented to this step, he was to be indulged in his animosity to Mr. Fox or any one else? Under no circumstances could that conduct be right in Mr. Pitt's own case which was wrong in Mr. Fox's; yet he was, if necessary, to be forced upon the King by Parliamentary pressure, while Mr. Fox's exclusion was to be acquiesced in.

Lord Melville in his answer assumes that if Mr. Pitt is called upon to form a new Administration, it will be upon what he calls the 'narrow basis.' Indeed it seems hard to imagine how any other expectation could have been entertained after the assurances which Mr. Pitt announced his intention of giving to the King, that those against whom he entertained 'such strong 'and natural objections,' should not be forced upon him; and a 'knowledge of the King's character' should have led Mr. Pitt to a directly opposite conclusion from that to which he came. But Lord Melville adds that he should be 'sorry if the business should 'end that way' (in the formation of a Government on the narrow basis), 'being' he says, 'as convinced as he 'ever was of anything in his life, that nothing can 'bring the country out of its difficulties except a sus-'pension of political animosities, and a collection of 'all the talents, vigour, and experience of the country 'in one general mass of energy and action.' Should Mr. Pitt be unable to effect this, he urges the necessity at least of distinct explanations both with Mr. Fox and Lord Grenville, and of an understanding with them, without which, he asks in conclusion, whether

'the Government formed on the narrow scale *would be* 'much better than the present.'

Mr. Rose appears also to have disapproved of the determination taken by Mr. Pitt, in which he thought he 'had not acted upon his own cool and temperate 'judgment,' and ascribes it (unjustly as it seems from what is above stated) to Lord Melville and the 'eager 'impatience of that nobleman for office.' Mr. Rose expresses great indignation against those who insisted on Mr. Fox's *immediate* admission into the Cabinet; that is, against those who, like my father and Lord Grenville, would not acquiesce in the principle of exclusion on which the new Cabinet was to be founded; but fears much, 'though Mr. Pitt can lose no *character*, &c.,' yet that 'he risks loss of *consequence*' to a very great extent, and looks upon 'the forming an Admi- 'nistration with little more than some of the late 'Ministers (whom we have been holding up to ridi- 'cule for a long time),' considering the attitude assumed by the Prince of Wales, 'as a desperate undertaking.'*

* The Reverend Editor of the Diaries of the Right Honourable G. Rose, in his remarks upon these transactions (vol. ii. pp. 100 *et seq.*), quotes a passage from Lord Brougham, warning historians against giving undue faith to contemporary writers, who must necessarily be influenced by their party predilections. And then goes on to offer himself as glaring an example (to use his own expressions) of 'an obliquity 'of mental vision, produced by party zeal,' and of 'falsehood embraced 'for truth, in order to impute ill motives to those whom they dislike,' as ever came under my observation. He can see impropriety in the epithets applied to George III. by Lord Brougham, but none in those he himself lavishes so freely on Mr. Fox. Nor does it seem to strike him as unfair, if not positively untrue, to say of that great man, in 1804, that his 'life, it is admitted, was a "life of gambling, intrigue, and 'faction,"' as if such a charge were still applicable; whereas Lord Brougham applies the terms, thus unfairly quoted, to the early follies and irregularities of Mr. Fox's life, which had been long forgotten, 'leaving' (as Lord Brougham adds, in the very passage from which the

My father thus expresses his own opinion of the conduct of Mr. Pitt on this occasion. Writing to my mother on the 8th May, when the nature of the new arrangement was known, he says: 'I saw Pitt in the 'House of Lords, and I think he looked very miser- 'able. We have no right to impute any unfairness to 'him, for he always avowed that he would do as he 'has done; but I would rather be any man in England 'than him.' And again a few days later, 'I do not 'say so but to those to whom I can speak confi- 'dentially, but nothing can exceed my contempt for the meanness of his conduct. In public, I say, as 'indeed I am bound to say, that we have no right to 'complain, but I should be sorry to think that either 'Fox or I, if placed in the same situation, could have 'acted as he has done.'

Of my father's own conduct in adhering as he did to Mr. Fox, involving as it did the prospect of a probably perpetual exclusion from office, there can be, I should imagine, but one opinion; and it certainly contrasted very strongly with the principles on which many public men of that day were not ashamed to act, and even to avow that they acted.*

above words are taken, but which the Reverend Editor does *not* quote) 'the noble heart and sweet disposition of that great man unscathed 'in passing through an ordeal, which, in almost every other instance, 'is found to deaden all the kindly and generous affections.' I find no fault with the Editor of these Diaries for expressing an opinion unfavourable to the Whigs as to these transactions. Every man has a right to form and declare his own. I will only say mine is exactly the reverse of his, and that the perusal of Mr. Rose's Diaries confirms in my mind the views which I have taken.

* See letter from Sir A. Hamond, described as a distinguished naval officer, and I believe a member of George III.'s household, to Mr. Eden, in the Journals and Correspondence of Lord Auckland, lately

To Mr. Pitt's new Administration, formed as it was, my father thought as little confidence was due as to that which had preceded it: 'For though,' he writes, on the 17th May, 'we would have joined Pitt to form a strong 'Administration, we never can be supposed to have 'entertained the opinion that *he* alone could give that 'character to what he has retained of the last, and the 'miserable imbecility which he has added to it.'

Opposition, therefore, now resumed its natural and accustomed course, but with this important difference, that the honourable conduct of Lord Grenville and his party in refusing to concur in the exclusion of Mr. Fox, had drawn them and the Whigs still closer together, and Mr. Fox could write, in October 1804, that 'Opposition seems now restored, at least to what 'it was before the Duke of Portland's desertion and 'the other adverse circumstances of the times.' But as my father had again for some months retired to Northumberland, he adds, 'Mind I say, *seems*, for if '*you* stay away, it will be very far from being really 'so; and whatever is gained will be thought by all, 'and most certainly by me, a bad exchange for you.'

published. He congratulates Mr. Eden, who had been an active partisan of Lord North, and a strong supporter of the Coalition Government in 1783, on his extrication 'out of an entanglement that bore the 'worst of aspects,' *i. e.* his connection with a party out of favour at Court, and with little hope of restoration to power. 'As to Charles Fox,' he adds, 'though I admire his abilities as much as anybody can, 'yet I am convinced that nothing but the death of the King, or a war, 'can bring him forward, and therefore I consider him destined to pass 'the greatest part of his life in Opposition. I have heard the King 'speak of him with that indignation, that I really believe he would 'rather sacrifice everything than allow him to come forward. *He there-*'*fore ought not to expect that people who are no way proscribed, should con-*'*tinue their adherence beyond certain limits.*'—*Correspondence of William, 1st Lord Auckland*, vol. i. p. 362.

Mr. Fox's letters to my father abound in similar passages expressive of the importance which he attached to his advice and co-operation, without which he had said, as already quoted, that 'all hope of 'any good in the country, nay, of any alleviation of 'evil, was at an end.' And he had looked to my father as the fittest person to be placed at the head of a liberal ministry, if such should be formed. 'Make up 'your mind,' he writes to him in February 1804, 'to 'be what you must be if things take the turn which I 'think not improbable. *I* will give you every assist-'ance, but *you* must be at the head.'

When, however, the reconstruction of the Government under Mr. Pitt, in May 1804, to the exclusion of the parties both of Mr. Fox and Lord Grenville, had led to a more direct and avowed union between these last, and the acknowledged weakness of the Administration induced the belief that Mr. Pitt would be compelled to enter into negotiations for the formation of a Government on a more extended basis, Mr. Fox wrote: 'As to yourself you know my wishes; 'but if a great sacrifice were made (a sacrifice which 'I feel quite sure will never be made)* on the other 'side, perhaps it would be expected that the nominal 'head should be a person less marked than you or I.'†

* The resignation, namely, of Mr. Pitt, as a preliminary to any negotiation for a new Government.

† In Mr. Rose's Diaries, &c., we find an interesting account of the conversations he had at the end of 1804 with the King at Weymouth and at his own place, Cuffnells. Mr. Rose expresses very strongly his own opinion of the absolute necessity of strengthening the Government; the King would then, Mr. Rose says, have consented to admit as many of the members of the Fox or Grenville parties, excepting only Mr. Fox

No overtures, however, were made by Mr. Pitt, though reports of such an intention on his part were constantly renewed during the whole of the short Administration which terminated with his death in January 1806. Attempts, indeed, at negotiations seem to have been set on foot during the same period from Carlton House, having for their professed object the formation of a strong Administration; but they also came to nothing. A sine quâ non condition, in my father's opinion, before any proposition from Mr. Pitt could be even entertained, was the resignation by that Minister of his situation as head of the Government, and a declaration that his Ministry was at an end. 'I do not think,' my father writes to Mr. Whitbread, on the subject of possible overtures from Mr. Pitt, and after giving other reasons for thinking that if made they would come to nothing—'he will ever 'bring himself to relinquish his present office, which I 'hope Fox will insist on as a sine quâ non.' There was, my father thought, a material difference between coming in on equal terms *with* Mr. Pitt, and coming in *to* him; and he was further strongly of opinion that if they consented to take office at all, they ought to provide a security for their principles being acted

himself, as Mr. Pitt desired. But in September, 1805, he extended his objections to the whole Opposition, and 'stated a positive determina-'tion against taking a single individual from the Opposition,' &c. Mr. Rose attributed this change of feeling on the part of the King—though only the natural consequence of Mr. Pitt's original acquiescence in the exclusion of Mr. Fox—to the secret machinations of Lord Hawkesbury, the Chancellor, &c. The King's opinion of his several Ministers, as expressed in these conversations, is curious if not very flattering.—*Rose's Diaries and Correspondence*, &c. vol. ii. pp. 155 *et seq.*

upon, by insisting upon having a majority in the Cabinet. 'In short,' he concludes, in the letter to Mr. Whitbread above quoted, 'on all sides I see so 'much difficulty, and, in every result, so little pros- 'pect of good, that, in the first place, I cannot believe 'any new arrangement including us will take place, 'and in the next, I have no wish that such an arrange- 'ment should be effected.'

With such opinions on one side, and with Mr. Pitt's well-known arrogance of disposition on the other, which, as Mr. Fox said, rendered him incapable of 'acting fairly and on a footing of equality with his 'equals,' it was clear that no agreement could be come to, nor is it to be wondered at that none was consequently attempted. Mr. Pitt was therefore reduced to the painful necessity of endeavouring to strengthen himself by a reconciliation with the very Minister he had so lately joined in opposing; and such a reconciliation (proving however but short-lived) was effected in the autumn of 1804. This gave him for the time a large majority in the House of Commons over the united parties of Mr. Fox and Lord Grenville on all subjects of either foreign or domestic policy. He was supported on the questions of the Continued Suspension of the Irish Habeas Corpus Act,* and of the rupture with Spain,† by majorities of

* The first reading of the Bill for suspending the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland was carried by 112 to 33. The motion for going into Committee on the Bill, by 159 to 54.

† Mr. Pitt's motion for an Address on the rupture with Spain was carried by 313 to 106.

between three and four to one; while a motion by Mr. Windham on the Defence of the Country,* and another by Mr. Sheridan for the repeal of the Additional Force Bill † (the latter only carried in the preceding session by the narrow majority, in a full house, of forty-four) were negatived by majorities of more than two to one.

The rupture with Spain was the only question on which my father (who had reluctantly yielded to Mr. Fox's repeated solicitations that he would attend the session of 1805) took a leading part. On Mr. Pitt's motion (Feb. 11) for an address to the King, affirming their conviction of the justice of the war, and giving Government credit for the 'fairness and moderation' which had marked their conduct towards Spain, he proposed an amendment by which, instead of expressing such approbation of the conduct of Ministers, he asked the House to record its opinion of their 'errors,' and of the 'fatal consequences that have resulted 'from them;' and while repeating the assurance of their readiness to support His Majesty to the utmost 'in every 'measure necessary to assert the rights and vindicate 'the honour of his Crown,' to point out that those objects 'could never be successfully pursued by negli-'gent and undecided counsels, nor attained by the 'violation of those engagements on which those with 'whom they treated had rested their security.'

My father admitted in the course of his speech that the treaty of San Ildefonso between France and Spain, might in itself have been a justifiable cause of war

* Negatived by 242 to 96. † Ditto by 267 to 127.

with the latter power. But having consented not so to consider it, if the Spanish Government did not go beyond the stipulations of that treaty in support of France; and having, tacitly at least, acquiesced in the substitution of succour in money, for the stipulated succour in men; Spain having further yielded to those demands on our part, without which she was informed that her neutrality could not be respected; our conduct in seizing the treasure ships without any previous declaration of war, and in the absence of any fresh provocation, was not only unjust towards Spain, but disgraceful to the Government which was guilty of it.

In the discussions relating to the impeachment of Lord Melville, brought forward by Mr. Whitbread and carried against the Government, and in the course of which the short-lived alliance between Mr. Pitt and the Addingtons was again dissolved, my father took little part. He supported Mr. Whitbread, however, in the course proposed, of proceeding by impeachment in preference to a criminal information; and he repelled an attack which Mr. Canning, in an intemperate speech, directed against 'the friends of Sir John Jervis 'and the kindred of Sir Charles Grey' for now 'join-'ing to hunt down' the nobleman, who, when 'these 'eminent commanders' were attacked in 1795, for their conduct in the West Indies,* 'had stood forward

* They had commanded the combined naval and military forces by which Martinique and other West India islands were captured in 1794; and seldom, I believe, has so cordial an understanding existed between our admirals and generals in any similar expedition.

'as the most zealous of their defenders.' In answer to this, my father, after detailing the nature of the attack then made, and the circumstances under which Lord Melville, as a member of the Government, had resisted it, proceeded: 'The right honourable gentleman has 'spoken as if those noble persons received favours 'from the noble lord who appeared in their defence. 'But I utterly disclaim the existence of any such 'favours. The noble lord had defended them, because 'they had served with credit and honour those by 'whom they were employed. This justice was due, not 'only to their particular merits, but it was due also 'to the country whose interests they had promoted.'

Shortly before the prorogation of Parliament (on the 20th of June), my father moved an address to the King, praying His Majesty not to resort to such a measure until he should be enabled to give more full information as to his relations with Foreign Powers, and as to his views and prospects in the contest in which he was engaged. In support of his motion he showed what he conceived to be the generally critical state of public affairs. He pointed out the unsatisfactory condition of our finances, with a debt increased in two years by the sum of thirty millions, in the face of the assurance given by the Ministers that the resources of the country were sufficient to meet the expenditure of the war. On the other hand, he called attention, notwithstanding our enormous expenditure, to the inadequacy of our armaments; no sufficient addition

having been made to our regular army; and our navy, in spite of the attacks made by Pitt on its administration by Lord St. Vincent, being still in an inefficient state, as proved by the escape of the different French squadrons then at sea, and the fears felt at that moment for the safety of our colonial possessions. He praised the spirit of loyalty that animated the people: 'Never,' he said, 'was the spirit of the whole nation 'more determined to resist every attack on their in-'dependence, and to defend themselves at all hazards.'

The state of Ireland, too, he thought afforded ground of satisfaction, owing chiefly 'to the conciliatory administration of Lord Hardwicke,' though much remained to be done; and he urged especially, as the only means of converting that country from a source of weakness, as it had hitherto been, to one of real strength to England, the necessity of removing every obstacle to the entire satisfaction of the Roman Catholic body. 'Much indeed,' he added, 'had been done' (in producing a good feeling towards England) 'by 'the example of the consequences of French aid to 'those who ever looked with any degree of hope to 'the effects of French co-operation.' . . . 'There is 'reason to hope that the Irish now see the advantage 'of British connection, and that they know that what 'they have to expect from the liberality and policy 'of Great Britain, would be utterly lost by French 'conquest; that by contributing to the injury of their 'natural friends by a correspondence with France, 'they would only be adding themselves to the list of

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'those slaves whom France had reduced under her 'dominion, either in an abject dependence, or totally 'stripped of their name and existence as nations.'

With respect to continental politics, he fully admitted that the 'interests of this country are intimately connected with those of the Continent, 'because without a great and powerful co-operation on 'the Continent, there can be no chance of reducing the 'power of France; and because, failing that, unless 'the Great Powers take a part in negotiation in one 'shape or other, any hope of permanent peace will be 'much weakened.' But though he deprecated on these grounds the conclusion of a separate peace, and thought that great responsibility would attach to those who might conclude one, even this might be preferable to the continuance of the war, in case the co-operation or concert of other Powers in negotiation should lead to no result. It was therefore, he thought, 'the 'imperious duty of the House to call upon Ministers 'to give us some rational prospect of pursuing the 'war with success, or to explain to us that peace on 'equitable and honourable terms is not to be obtained.' The ignorance in which the House was kept as to the nature of the pacific overtures which had been made by France, and as to the state of our relations with other Powers, particularly with Russia—added to the unsatisfactory state of our finances as well as of our military means—were the reasons which induced him to move this address.

The motion was strongly supported by Mr. Wind-

ham and Mr. Fox—opposed by Mr. Pitt, Mr. Canning, and Lord Castlereagh—and negatived by a majority of two hundred and sixty one, to one hundred and ten.

Upon the questions above referred to, and upon others of minor interest that occurred during this session, but requiring no special notice here, there had been a general coincidence of opinion between the old and the new Oppositions,* and they had, for the most part, concurred heartily in their attacks upon the Government. But during the recess another subject came under discussion, on which not only was the agreement between the parties less entire—but involving no slight danger of the revival of former differences.

That question had reference to our continental policy; for though my father had admitted, as already stated, that 'without a great and powerful co-opera-'tion on the Continent, there could be no chance of 'reducing the power of France, &c.;' yet both he and Mr. Fox were strongly opposed to the system of endeavouring to obtain such co-operation by means of large subsidies; and to such a system the Grenvilles had been too long parties, as members of Mr. Pitt's first Administration, to admit of their now uniting with the Whigs to condemn it. They consequently objected to the attack which, before the fatal result of the German campaign of 1805 was known (though all

* In the correspondence between my father and Mr. Fox, the Whig and Grenville parties, are constantly thus distinguished.

the intelligence received seemed to point surely and inevitably to that result), Mr Fox thought ought to be directed against Mr. Pitt, for having 'set on foot the 'ill-timed, rash, and ill-concerted attack of the 'Austrians, without waiting either for Prussia, or 'even for the Russian armies that were to form so 'main a part of the strength.' The chief reason given by them for objecting, was the fear that such attacks would 'tend to destroy all hope and spirit here.' And Mr. Windham, in writing on the subject to my father, expressed his 'regret and alarm at the extent 'to which Mr. Fox carried his doctrine of not resisting 'by force.' The difference of opinion between them on this point, would, he thought, render it necessary that they should in the ensuing session, 'move in two or 'three separate columns; all, however, he hoped, assist-'ing each other, and tending to one point.' My father, however, saw in these 'separate columns, or rather 'these separate armies,' a probably 'great advantage 'to Pitt,' and he feared that 'instead of meeting in one 'point, it will end in some of them joining him.'

When the news arrived of the catastrophe of Austerlitz, this danger seemed to be materially lessened; and my father, in writing to Mr. Fox, expresses his hope that 'should the continental war be over, the 'motions for inquiry that will be obvious; and of 'censure, if upon the result of that inquiry it should 'appear that we urged Austria to acts of direct hos-'tility before Prussia was engaged, before the Russian

'army could arrive, and even before we ourselves 'were prepared to make the slightest move in her 'support,' . . . would not occasion 'any diversity of 'opinion.'

The turn, however, that affairs might take in the ensuing session seemed still doubtful; and Mr. Fox wrote on the 10th of January 1806, that 'he was 'more sanguine than he had been about our all agree-'ing, though God knows far from feeling anything 'like certainty.' 'I do not think,' he proceeds, 'that 'any of our friends, or even the Ministry, are mad 'enough to wish for another campaign in Germany, 'even with the Russians; but the difficulties will be 'of a minor kind, arising from apprehensions which I 'deem unreasonable, lest the condemnation of the par-'ticular attempt should imply a condemnation of the 'general system.'

All these doubts and speculations, however, were speedily set at rest by the unexpected death of Mr. Pitt, which occurred soon after the opening of the session, without his having been once able to appear in Parliament; and whatever might have been the consequences of the differences above alluded to, had the two parties continued to occupy the Opposition benches, they were soon cordially and firmly united under Lord Grenville, in an Administration powerful in everything but the support of the Court.

CHAPTER III.

FROM THE DEATH OF MR. PITT, AND FORMATION OF THE WHIG MINISTRY IN 1806, TO MY FATHER'S REMOVAL TO THE HOUSE OF LORDS IN 1807.

ON the death of Mr. Pitt, the parties of Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox came into power; and were united under the former as First Lord of the Treasury, and the latter as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in a Government—powerful, as I have already remarked, in all but the support of the Court.

The King, it is believed, had done all he could to avoid the necessity of calling the Whigs to his councils; and during the five days that elapsed before he commissioned Lord Grenville to form a new Administration, is supposed to have endeavoured to induce Lord Hawkesbury, or indeed any other member of the old Administration who should have nerve for the task, to undertake the responsibility of still carrying it on.

But though it would thus appear that the new Government was, in a manner, forced upon the King, and he seems to have been ready to seize the first opportunity of getting rid of it, yet the circumstances attending its formation appear greatly to strengthen the suspicion that Mr. Pitt was not sincerely desirous, in 1804, of obtaining the co-operation of Mr. Fox in

the Administration; and that, had he been so, he would have found no insuperable objection on the part of the King. For Lord Malmesbury tells us that, on the death of Mr. Pitt, the King spontaneously adopted the opinion, contrary to that expressed by the Duke of York, that the presence of Mr. Fox in the Cabinet was essential to the stability of any Government that might now be formed.

Mr. Rose, also the devoted friend of Mr. Pitt, sees the probability that this inference may be drawn from what now occurred: 'His Majesty,' he says, 'had 'made up his mind to admit of such an Administration 'as should be recommended to him, *without* any exclu- 'sion. The promptitude with which that determina- 'tion is taken may, I think, lead to a suspicion in 'some minds, that Mr. Pitt had not made all the exer- 'tions he stated to his friends he had done, for pre- 'vailing with the King to admit Mr. Fox to his 'councils; the certainty of which, however, is as clear 'to me as my own existence.'*

In the Government now formed, my father was appointed First Lord of the Admiralty, and was made at once to experience all the annoyances to which men in power are ever subject, and which to him were peculiarly painful, arising from the impatience and unreasonable complaints of friends, either angry at being passed over altogether, or dissatisfied with the arrangements proposed for them.

* Diaries of Right Hon. G. Rose, vol. ii., p. 236.

No man was ever less exacting for himself; and he was at all times ready to abandon any claims of his own to those of his friends—happy if, by so doing, he could satisfy and remove discontent on the part of others. To a dear personal friend, and one of the most unreasonable of those who considered themselves aggrieved by not being included in the new arrangements, he thus writes: 'The very few words you 'uttered to me to-night have hurt me beyond expres-'sion; not only as they showed the mortification you 'suffer, which can never happen without pain to me, 'but as they conveyed something like reproach for my 'neglect of you. What could I do? . . . I stated my 'wishes to Fox. . . . I am, for myself, the worst soli-'citor in the world; and perhaps the same feeling 'may make me not so good an advocate as I ought to 'be for my friends. But could I do more than suggest 'the arrangement which would be most gratifying to 'me, and leave it to him (Fox), to take the necessary 'steps, or rather such steps as he *could* take, for that 'purpose?'

Again he says, 'Indeed, the subject which appears 'to hurt your feelings so much, is not less painful to 'mine . . . I cannot ask for the ——. Fox has 'heard me say enough to be out of all doubt as to my 'wishes. Upon this I shall not say another word, for 'I cannot be pressing for myself. With this feeling I 'play at a very unequal game, for I do not meet 'with the same forbearance in others, particularly in

'some of my new colleagues.' And in real bitterness of spirit at such repeated and unjust accusations of neglecting his friends, he writes at another 'time: 'I have not had a moment's happiness since 'this cursed arrangement began; and I am now 'going to have another sleepless night. I wish to 'God I could satisfy all discontents by resigning my 'own office.'

I must take this opportunity of protesting against the gross injustice which has, since 1830, been done to my father on this question of patronage; for I may fearlessly assert that, of all the unjust accusations that have ever been made against a public man, there is none that is more unjust, or more unfounded, than that which it has been sought to fix upon him, of nepotism in the distribution of his patronage, when Minister from 1830 to 1834. And I have sometimes doubted whether we have been right in treating this charge with the silent contempt with which it has ever been met, when repeated, as it has been, ad nauseam, by vulgar opponents in speeches and newspaper articles. Several relatives no doubt held office in his administration, but they were all, with scarcely an exception, those who had already achieved for themselves a position in the Whig ranks that would not have allowed them to be passed over, totally irrespective of their connection with my father, in any Liberal Government that was formed. Without going into details, though this would be easy, my short answer, then, to the

charge of nepotism is, that to *no one* of his own family did he give either pension or place, as a means of providing for them, during his tenure of office. Commissionerships of Customs and Excise, and of Greenwich Hospital and other places, which have usually been considered by Ministers, both before and *after* his time, as fair appointments for sons or nephews, &c., fell to his disposal; but he invariably gave them to those who had the strongest claims upon the Party—and this with seven younger sons of his own, all indifferently provided for, *not one of whom benefited in the remotest degree by his being for four years at the head of the Government.* As he himself says, in the letter quoted above, no one was ever so little pressing for himself. And yet this is the man who is to go down to posterity with the charge of nepotism affixed to his name!*

* Since the above was written, I have read the Grenville Correspondence, published by the Duke of Buckingham, and the Diaries, &c. of Mr. G. Rose, edited by Mr. Vernon Harcourt. Who that has read the former, has not turned with something approaching disgust from the pertinacious advancement of personal pretensions; the querulous complaints for claims disregarded; the demand for places and pensions or the reversion of sinecure offices; the eagerness, in short, with which a 'provision' from the public purse was sought by those who figure in this correspondence, for themselves or friends! Even Mr. Pitt, whose disinterestedness (against which I do not wish to say a word) it has been the fashion to exalt at the expense of my father, made it his dying request, according to Mr. Rose, that pensions of from £1200 to £1500 a year should be granted to *each* of his three nieces, daughters of Lord Stanhope, and of £1000 a year to each of his two nephews! Mr. Pitt received, I believe, the salaries both of the First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer—besides being Warden of the Cinque Ports—a total of from £13,000 to £15,000 a year. My father had the salary of First Lord of the Treasury alone, which it was one of the first

The measures of the Grenville Administration are matters of history, into which I do not wish to enter further than as my father was personally concerned in them. And while he was at the head of the Admiralty, the duties of the office being too heavy to admit of his taking much part in the general business of Government, his name seldom appears in the debates of the House of Commons, where, indeed, his attendance during this time was very uncertain.

Of his administration of the Admiralty I may confidently affirm, that at no time was more energy displayed in preparing the means for defeating the maritime enterprises of France; never were those means more judiciously applied; and never was the success which resulted from them more signal or decided.

But he was only too soon called to a more prominent position in the party and Government. Towards the middle of June Mr. Fox's health had become such as to excite the alarm of his friends; and some time before the conclusion of the session he had been forced to discontinue his attendance in the House of Commons. It soon became apparent that there was only too much reason to apprehend a fatal result to his illness. Still it was not till towards the middle of August that all hope of his ultimate recovery was abandoned. On the 2nd of that month my father wrote to Mr. Whit-

acts of his government to reduce from £6000 to £5000 a year; nor will one word be found in his most private correspondence, from first to last, of claim or demand for place, pension, or any public provision whatever, either for himself or any of his friends or relations.

bread: 'I am happy to say that the good appearance 'and good spirits of Fox to-day, but still more the 'good symptoms, have given me a little gleam of hope.' This glimmering of hope, however, soon faded away; the disease made steady progress, and on the 8th of September my father again writes: 'I myself called 'at Chiswick, and if Esculapius himself were to assure 'me there was the slightest chance of poor Fox's reco-'very, I should not believe him. I had not seen him 'before since he was last tapped, and I was shocked 'at the change since that time. If ever I saw the 'marks of death in a man's countenance, they were 'legible in his, and my own belief is that he has not a 'fortnight to live.'

The end was even nearer than he anticipated. The next day he again writes: 'Poor Fox is going more 'rapidly than I expected. A sudden failure of strength 'took place yesterday, about eleven, and he was only 'supported through the day by strong cordials and 'brandy. The account is a little better this morning, 'but I should not be surprised if he is dead when this 'reaches you.' From this to the 13th he merely lingered on without a ray of hope. On that day my father's last communication from Chiswick announces that he was 'at the last extremity,' and before it closed this illustrious statesman had breathed his last.

Attached as my father had been to Mr. Fox for twenty years, and that with a depth of devotion which the endearing qualities of that great man and his trans-

cendent talents were so well calculated to inspire—by none was his loss more keenly felt or more bitterly deplored. He had lost not only the political chief by whom, from his first entrance into public life, he had been distinguished above all others, and by whose precepts and example he had been confirmed in his attachment to constitutional liberty, and to principles based upon a benevolent and comprehensive philanthropy; but the friend between whom and himself there existed an affection, which mutual generosity of feeling and abnegation of self could not fail to engender. In truth, these two great statesmen (surely I am justified in so qualifying my father) had been united in a stricter, more intimate, and more enduring friendship, than is often found to smooth the path of public life. Their whole correspondence breathes the spirit of two noble, generous, and unselfish natures, whose only aspirations were for the good of their common country. To the last hours of his own life my father clung with unabated affection to the memory of his early political guide and friend; and in his latter years it was a source of self-congratulation with him to reflect, that throughout his connection with Mr. Fox there had never been the slightest approach to difference between them, that he had stood by him through evil report and good report, when some of his earliest friends for a time fell from him, and that he had deserved the reciprocity of confidence and affection with which his constant devotion had been rewarded.

My father has recorded his feelings of love and admiration for Mr. Fox in an inscription under his bust at Woolbeding in Sussex, at that time the seat of Lord Robert Spencer, and a great resort during the intervals of Parliamentary business for the chief members of the Whig party. In 1822 he also had an intention, why abandoned I know not, of further recording his affection for the memory of Mr. Fox by a similar inscription under his bust at Howick. He wrote one for the purpose, which, after some slight verbal amendments by Mr. Tate of Richmond School in Yorkshire, stood ultimately as follows :—

Carolus Jacobus Fox
Vir
(Si quis alius)
Moribus simplex, præstans ingenio, recti tenax,
Amicus, jucundus, comis, benignus.
Utilitatis negligens privatæ—
Publicæ studiosissimus.
Ob Eloquentiam vi, fulgore, abundantiâ
Nec minus, festivitate et venustate excellentem,
Inter celeberrimos oratores—
Ob Fidem, Benevolentiam, Probitatem, Constantiam,
Inter Optimos Cives, numerandus,
Et dignus quem homines Universi amarent
Ut humanarum injuriarum presentem vindicem.
Immortali Viro,
Carolus Comes Grey
Per viginti annos
Sanctissimâ cum eo amicitiâ conjunctus,
Ejusque preceptis, exemplo, auctoritate,
Ad Instituta Majorum
Et Civium jura tuenda, instructus
Hoc pro se,
Quod sui omnes diu contemplentur,
Pietatis et Desiderii
Monumentum
Ex animo dedicat.

On the death of Mr. Fox my father lost no time in paying the last mournful tribute of affection to his memory, by arranging with his other friends, and with the consent of his nephew, Lord Holland, for his funeral in Westminster Abbey.

My father now stood in Mr. Fox's place as leader of the Whig section of the Government, and it fell upon him to discuss with Lord Grenville the new arrangements rendered necessary by the untimely death of that great man.

He proposed three plans:—

1st. To take the Foreign Office himself, with the lead of the House of Commons, Mr. Thomas Grenville succeeding him at the Admiralty, and Lord Holland being appointed Privy Seal.

2nd. To remain himself at the Admiralty, Lord Holland succeeding his uncle as Foreign Secretary.

And, 3rdly. To go out of office altogether himself, or to go up to the House of Lords either as President of the Council or Privy Seal, Mr. George Ponsonby (then Irish Chancellor) taking the lead of the House of Commons and the Home Department, Lord Holland the Foreign Seals, and Lord Spencer the Admiralty.

The only condition on which he thought it was due to Mr. Fox's friends that he should insist as a sine quâ non, was that either Lord Holland or himself should succeed to the Foreign Office.

The Prince of Wales was at this time an avowed partizan of Mr. Fox's; and I must here insert two

letters written by him to my father, when he first heard of the loss which the Whigs had sustained in the death of their great leader, and of the arrangements which were in contemplation for the reconstruction of the Ministry. These had been immediately communicated to him by my father; and I insert his answers, both because they show how completely at this time the Prince identified himself with the Whig party (a curious fact to note, considering the relations in which he afterwards placed himself, both as Regent and King, towards that party), and because the tone of the letters must set at rest many idle stories that have been related of an estrangement of long standing, and of its causes, between His Royal Highness and my father.

'Knowsley, Sept. 18, 1806.

'My dear Grey,

'I am hardly in a state to write at all, much 'less to answer your very friendly letter. As to my 'feelings it would be superfluous to say anything, as 'they exceed all belief, and all power of description. 'I consider the loss we have sustained as incalculable 'to the country, and irreparable to all his friends, and 'to myself in particular. Having, from the earliest 'period of my life, when I first entered a political 'career, looked up to no one but to Fox; having been 'constantly and invariably attached to him and to his 'principles; having trodden that path which he marked 'out for me; and having been guided through it by the

'support of his hand; I do candidly acknowledge to 'you, that the difference is so prodigious, the loss so 'immense, that my thoughts are quite bewildered, and 'that as yet I have not been able to collect my ideas 'so as to bring them to any one point.

'As to Lord Grenville, for whom I entertain the 'very highest personal regard and friendship, I felt 'quite confident that you would find him everything 'that could be wished or expected from a strictly 'honourable and great-minded man; which opinion I 'have long entertained of him, and which induced me 'so anxiously to wish to bring him and our de- 'parted and for-ever-to-be-lamented friend together, 'and to frame and consolidate that union in which I 'afterwards so fortunately succeeded. But as to our- 'selves, my friend, the old and steady adherents and 'friends of Fox, we have but one line to pursue, one 'course to steer—to stick together, to remain united, 'and to prove by our conduct, in our steady and un- 'shaken adherence to those principles which we imbibed 'from Fox, when living, that now, though alas! he is 'no more! that we were not merely nominally his 'friends, but that we are not unworthy of him, and that 'his memory will for ever live in our hearts. In say- 'ing this, all I mean to convey is, what my sentiments 'are as to the line which it behoves us to trace, and '*abstractedly* attaches to *us*, as the *old, firm,* and *uni- 'form adherents* of Fox.

'As to my opinions, if I can form any at the present 'moment, and to which I profess myself perfectly

'unequal, it does appear to me that everything ought 'to be done which *can* be done, for every possible 'reason, to convince and to substantiate to our own 'nation, as well as to foreign powers, that such is the 'respect, such the regard, that the present Ministers 'not only feel individually as men, but collectively as 'a Government, for the memory of our dear departed 'friend, and such the estimation in which they hold his 'principles, and the reverence with which they view 'the great and enlightened system which he had pre-'pared, and was so indefatigably pursuing; and which 'no one was able to frame but himself; and which there 'is no doubt he would have successfully brought to the 'desired point; that they are resolutely resolved, 'steadily and firmly to adhere to, and to follow up 'those ideas, those views, those plans, which were laid 'down by his masterly hand, and which line will be 'attended, I have no doubt, with the happiest conse-'quences, as it will infallibly be the means of esta-'blishing confidence at home, as well as all over the 'Continent.

'The simplest and most natural mode, it does, I 'confess to you, appear to me of effecting this in the 'first instance (subject always to better and wiser 'opinions than mine, and subject also to any subsequent 'arrangements that it might be thought necessary 'or advisable to make) would be, without any delay, 'not to make any change whatever just at the present 'moment, but to put the seals for the Foreign Depart-'ment into the hands of Holland. You know Holland

'too well to make it necessary to say one word about 'him; but as far as I can allow or induce myself to 'view anything that tends to business under our 'present most distressing situation, this is what appears 'to me to be the most correct, as well as desirable 'measure, and it cannot but be attended with universal 'satisfaction, and peculiarly so to all Fox's old friends, 'and, though last, most singularly grateful to myself.

'With respect to what you so delicately state to me, 'my dear Grey, concerning yourself, as you know me 'to detest all flattery, and all prolixity of expression, I 'shall merely say, that the regard and admiration with 'which I have viewed your talents, and the friendship 'which has always subsisted between us, decide my 'opinion upon the propriety and wisdom of those duties 'which rested upon that great and for-ever-to-be-'lamented man, devolving upon you. It remains only 'for me to assure you how truly happy I shall be, and 'what comfort it will afford me, to communicate in the 'fullest confidence with you, and by every means in 'my power, to aid and strengthen the views and wishes 'of the Government.

'I am, ever,

'Very affectionately yours,

'(Signed) GEORGE P.'

My father having told the Prince the plan which had been proposed for reorganising the Ministry—the difficulties which interposed—and having alluded to the possible alternative of having to declare to the

King that they were unable to form an Administration capable of meeting the present crisis, his Royal Highness wrote in answer, as follows:—

'PRIVATE AND SECRET. 'Doncaster, Sept. 22, 1806.

'MY DEAR GREY,

'ALTHOUGH it is now past three in the morning, 'and that I am quite knocked up with the long journey 'of this day, I cannot delay writing a few lines in 'answer to both your letters, the one of which I re- 'ceived at Knowsley this morning previous to my 'departure, and the other which I have this instant 'found on my arrival here. I think myself peculiarly 'fortunate that the cursory view I took in my letter to 'you of our present situation coincides so entirely with 'your opinions; but I must candidly and *most confiden- 'tially* acknowledge to you, that it grieves me much 'that any of Fox's old friends should, of themselves, 'think of retiring from their situations at a moment 'like the present: as there never was a moment, in my 'poor opinion, that could so imperiously call upon them 'to remain in office, were it only by every exertion, on 'their part, to further and bring to bear, as far as lay 'in their power, that general system, but more espe- 'cially that system upon the Continent, which the great 'and powerful mind of our poor friend would soon have 'effected. I think it is a duty they owe his memory, 'and a duty they owe to this country, as well as to 'Europe. For God's sake talk not to me of such an

'alternative as you mentioned in the letter which I re-
'ceived from you this morning. I really conceive it
'would be ruinous in every point that I can view it;
'ruinous to the country in the first instance, and ruinous
'to your own reputations in the second; and I am cer-
'tain, were he alive, it would be what he would deprecate
'more than anything else; and last of all it would be
'considered as a miserable copy of the grounds which
'the last despicable and odious Administration took,
'upon the death of Pitt, for sending in their resignations.

'My dear friend, this is a strange world we live in,
'and nothing can be done in it without a little temper
'and a little policy. We must do the best we can, and
'because we cannot have everything our own way, we
'must not, therefore, instantly throw up the whole
'game, and by that means become the tool of others.
'This would not be consistent with what we owe to our
'own characters; to the language we have held; to the
'line we have publicly pursued; and, last of all, to what
'we ought never to lose sight of,—the precepts we have
'learnt from Fox, and what I am confident, were he now
'able to advise, would be his wishes. At the same time
'that I say this, I desire, my good friend, that you will
'clearly understand me—that I by no means mean that
'we should relax in any one instance, to carry such
'points as may be necessary to the completion of those
'great views, nor in any effort that may tend towards
'the accomplishment of them: though there may be
'difficulties and delays, still we must not be dis-

'heartened, but boldly meet them, and, if it should be 'necessary, reasonably to submit to them. I should 'hope that when you mentioned such an alternative to 'me, you were influenced by the distress under which 'we were both suffering, and which may mislead the 'very best judgment. Besides what I have already 'said, reflect one instant how fatal it would be to *me*, 'in this peculiarly delicate and awful moment, to be 'left in such a situation by *all* my friends, exposed to 'the accumulation of distress both public and *private*. 'I need not, I am sure, my dear Grey, say more to you 'than this—only to call upon you to rouse all the 'energies of your mind—but, proudly and with cool 'judgment, let us meet whatever may arise, thereby 'performing, to our best, our duties to the country, as 'well as those which we owe to the memory of our 'departed friend.

'I really am so fatigued that I cannot answer for 'any inaccuracies you may find in this letter; *but I will 'answer for my firm and steady adherence to these prin- 'ciples and opinions.*

'I am, ever, my dear Grey,

'Most truly yours,

'(Signed) GEORGE P.'

It will be seen from the above letters that the Prince wished Lord Holland to succeed his uncle in the Foreign Office; and Mr. Fox himself, in the only conversation in which he seems to have alluded to the

arrangements to be made at his own death, expressed a similar desire to Lord Lauderdale. My father also stated in writing to Lord Grenville that of the three plans he had proposed he thought the second (that, namely, which would simply transfer the seals of the Foreign Office to Lord Holland) 'would be the most ac-'ceptable to Fox's friends,' adding that 'the last (that 'which involved his own retirement, or removal at 'least, to the House of Lords), whatever surprise it 'might at first create, would ultimately prove the 'most advantageous.' He then proceeds, with that abnegation of self which invariably marked his conduct in such matters: 'As far as I am myself con-'cerned, I am equally ready to accede to any one of 'the three, if no other arrangement should suggest 'itself to you. My wish is to make all personal con-'siderations subservient to the general interests of the 'Government; but I could not give you any useful 'support if I should appear to Fox's friends to have con-'sented to too great a sacrifice of their influence; and 'I feel it to be absolutely indispensable in any arrange-'ment which may be made, that the Seals of the Foreign 'Department should be held either by Lord Holland 'or myself. I must at the same time declare, with 'the most perfect sincerity, that I would, on all 'accounts, infinitely prefer seeing them in his hands to 'holding them myself.'

The great objection to the second plan was the difficulty which my father might find in adding the busi-

ness of the House of Commons to the very heavy detail duties of the Admiralty; and that it also required a greater re-arrangement of offices, entailing upon others what they might consider as personal sacrifices. And such, though ever ready to make them himself, he says he should be "unwilling to urge with unreason-'able importunity upon any one else.'

The advantage of the third plan was that it would be a final settlement; and that on the death of his father, and his own consequent removal to the House of Lords (an event, as it seemed, in all probability not far distant), no new arrangement would be necessary. 'I foresee,' he writes to Lord Grenville of this plan—'that it will startle you; but upon the whole I 'believe it to be the best. Sacrifices must be made by 'somebody, and those which I have offered will be made 'with the most sincere satisfaction. George Ponsonby, 'I am persuaded, will prove, if not at first, after a 'short time, the most effective Leader of the House of 'Commons; and, according to this arrangement, no 'farther changes would be necessary.'

The first of the three plans proposed, was, as might be expected, that which was decided upon by Lord Grenville, and finally carried into effect. Indeed, he (Lord Grenville) had never contemplated any plan as possible, in the existing state of the House of Commons, which did not give the lead in that assembly to my father, and seems to have looked forward to his probably early removal to the House of Lords, as

likely to involve the breaking up of the Administration.

The political connection between my father and Lord Grenville which was thus commenced in 1806, continued without interruption, and in a spirit of mutual confidence and respect worthy of such high-minded statesmen, till 1815. In that year the different view taken by them of the policy which it became England to adopt on the return of Napoleon from Elba, followed in 1816 and 1817 by more important differences on the subject of our domestic policy (and which will be more particularly noticed in their place), led to a final political separation: without, however, impairing those mutual sentiments of attachment and respect, resulting from their long union, and the knowledge each had acquired of the character and high principle of the other.

Lord Grenville's correspondence proves, not only the importance he attached during this period to the continuance of my father in the House of Commons, but that his own connection with the Whig Party, through many years of opposition, was maintained entirely by the confidence he felt he could repose in him. 'I had great confidence,' Lord Grenville writes, after the dismissal of the ministry, and in speaking, in November 1807, of the prospects of the opposition in which they were then embarked: 'I 'had great confidence in Lord Howick's principles, 'temper, and management. But Lord Howick being 'gone' (he had then been removed to the House of

Lords by the death of his father), 'I have no concep-
'tion that the opposition in the House of Commons can,
'by any other person whatever, be kept within many de-
'grees of those limits which I should prescribe myself.'*

On the other hand, my father says, in speaking of Lord Grenville's own conduct during the discussions consequent upon Mr. Fox's death, and in language equally applicable to the whole period of their political connection: 'Everything he has done, and every view 'he has taken of this melancholy subject, has been 'entirely in that fair and liberal spirit in which the 'union between him and Mr. Fox was originally 'formed. Nothing indeed could have been in every 'respect more cordial and more open than the whole 'of his conduct.'

To my father himself the re-arrangement of the ministry had not been without a repetition of the annoyances to which he had been subjected on its first formation; and he now writes to the same friend of whose conduct he had had to complain on the former occasion, that they 'would at once have decided him 'to give the whole thing up, if he had thought he could 'do so with honour, or without giving poor Fox's 'friends, a right to complain of him.'

When my father succeeded to the Foreign Office,

* Mr. Wm. Fremantle also, in writing to Lord Buckingham, speaks of 'Lord Howick's loss in the House of Commons as irreparable—per-'fectly so, as long as the connection exists between your friends and 'him, and I am sure you will see with me that nothing can take his 'place.'

the negotiation with France which had been opened through Lord Yarmouth, and with which Lord Lauderdale was afterwards charged, was drawing to a close. Every effort to bring the French Government back to the basis which they had themselves proposed had hitherto failed; and as Lord Lauderdale's further endeavours to effect that object proved equally vain, he was ordered to demand his passports, and accordingly left Paris on his return to England on the 6th of October.

An attempt was made by the French Emperor to ascribe the failure of this endeavour to restore peace, to the death of Mr. Fox, and to a departure, on the part of those who succeeded him in the conduct of our Foreign Affairs, from the policy which had been acted upon by him. The same impression seems to have been formed and expressed by Mr. Whitbread, to whom my father thus writes in December, 1806:—

'I have received your letter, and cannot express 'my disappointment and regret at the impression which 'the French publication has made upon you.' . . 'The 'more I consider it, the more I am satisfied with 'Lauderdale's conduct. Indeed, I do not see how it 'was possible for him to do what I suppose you would 'have approved more, i.e. to show a greater disposition 'for peace. It was necessary to bring the French back 'to the offer by which they had induced us to enter 'into the negotiation, and the whole time he was at 'Paris he was engaged in an ineffectual struggle for

'that purpose. No professions short of this could be 'satisfactory, even if they were to be trusted; and 'when the conduct of the negotiation comes to be ex- 'amined, I am much more apprehensive that we shall 'be accused of going too far in our endeavours to obtain 'peace, than that we did too little.' . . 'You know 'poor Fox's anxiety for peace, an anxiety certainly 'not lessened by the situation in which he was during 'the negotiation. He entirely approved of Lauder- 'dale's conduct, and thought that the French Govern- 'ment had left him no choice. The last time he spoke 'of the negotiation was on the Sunday before he died. 'He then said the great points for the country to ad- 'here to, were: 1st Sicily,* 2nd Russian connection.† 'And on these the negotiation broke off.'

But in truth the negotiation can scarcely be said from the beginning to have been conducted by Mr. Fox. Soon after the termination of the first correspondence between him and M. de Talleyrand, in which he makes concert with Russia a sine quâ non, his last illness commenced, rendering him, almost from the

* The basis originally proposed through Lord Yarmouth was that of the Uti possidetis;—and as holding Sicily for the King of Naples, expelled by the French from his continental possessions, the English Government felt itself bound in honour to insist that it should not be made an exception to the proposed basis.

† For a short time after the signature of a separate Treaty on the part of Russia, by M. d'Oubril, independent negotiations were commenced, and Lord Yarmouth, rather hastily as it was thought by Government, produced his full powers. But when the Russian Government refused to ratify M. d'Oubril's treaty, the principle of joint negotiation was again insisted on.

first, incapable of attending to any business. 'He 'has, from the beginning of his illness,' my father writes to Mr. Whitbread shortly before its fatal termination, 'banished from his mind all subjects which 'give him any uneasiness. He never inquires, and 'generally changes the subject if you attempt to talk 'to him on the conduct of the war or the progress of 'the negotiation. The whole of the latter has indeed 'been carried on in his name without his reading the 'papers which he has signed.'

His opinion, however, was well known to his friends; and in mentioning his belief that Mr. Fox had 'never 'read the instructions to Lord Lauderdale, though he 'signed them,' my father adds: 'But I can answer for 'their being in strict conformity with his opinion.'

I may here quote a letter which my father wrote to Mr. Whitbread in July 1808, in which he again adverts to this attempt to fix upon those who succeeded Mr. Fox in the conduct of affairs, and particularly upon himself as his successor in the Foreign Office, any blame that might attach to the rupture of this negotiation. 'I have always,' he says, 'thought it a 'little hard, that a sort of distinction should be made 'upon the question of peace between the other members 'of the Administration, and particularly between 'myself, and Fox. You may be assured that there 'was not a single point insisted upon in the late nego- 'tiation, which he did not think material to be insisted 'on. Above all, the acknowledgment on the part of

'the French of the principle on which we had been 'invited to treat. This he thought the more essential, 'as he had trusted to their good faith in the sort of 'irregular communication we had received; that it 'was quite intolerable, and destroyed all hope of a 'successful issue, after having drawn us into a nego- 'tiation upon a stated ground, afterwards to recede 'from it; and that they must be brought back to it, 'or the negotiation must cease. It was on this point 'that the last letter he ever wrote was written; and 'though, as his malady increased, his attention to these 'matters lessened, I can most confidently affirm that 'there was nothing done that had not his approbation.'

Our contemporary historians have generally approved of the course pursued by the Government with respect to these negotiations. But their conduct of the war has been as fiercely assailed. The failure of the expedition to Constantinople under Sir John Duckworth, the fruitless result of that sent from Sicily to Egypt, and the disastrous termination of that to South America, have been constantly and more particularly dwelt upon, as proofs of the want of judgment or capacity on the part of Ministers, both in planning and conducting military enterprises. The narrative of these events belongs properly to history; and as the War Department, and the conduct of the war, was not under my father's direction, and he had only the limited responsibility which attaches to every member of a Cabinet by which a particular course is

adopted, any lengthened notice of them here would be out of place. I may remark, however, that the judgment which has been passed upon the Whig Ministers for these expeditions seems most undeserved; at all events as regards those to Constantinople and South America. Of the former, even that high Tory historian, Sir A. Alison, admits it to have been well conceived, and only to have failed through the incapacity of Sir John Duckworth, and his positive disobedience of orders.

But the failure of this expedition, although owing to causes over which they had no control, was yet a source of deep mortification to the Government which had planned it, but which had left office before the issue was known. My father in writing on the 2nd of May to Mr. Adair, at that time our Minister at Vienna, thus expresses his feelings on the occasion:

'The business of Constantinople has mortified me 'beyond all description. I had thought the arrival of 'so powerful a fleet must have been decisive, nor do 'I think it could have failed of its effect, if so much 'time had not been so unaccountably lost in negotia-'tion. A prompt compliance with our demands, or im-'mediate hostilities, should have been the alternative, 'and if this had been acted upon, in the state of 'preparation in which the Turkish capital appears to 'have been on the first appearance of our fleet, it 'seems to me nearly certain that the business would 'have been completely done. I have not seen Sir 'John Duckworth's despatches, and do not know how

'he will justify his conduct; but his instructions were 'precisely in the spirit in which I have been writing, 'and it will require some strong facts to excuse him 'for having departed from them. Of course it will be 'the object of the partizans of the present Ministers 'to throw the blame on us, and their newspapers are 'teeming with attacks of this nature. The chief charge 'is our not having sent troops; as if any number we 'could have sent would have been of any use in such 'a situation, either to attack Constantinople, or to 'hold the castles of the Dardanelles, which might have 'been immediately wrested from them, if they could 'have gained possession of them, by the immense 'military population of those countries. But the 'great object was expedition. The delay of a pre-'paration to carry any considerable land force, and 'the embarrassment which it would have occasioned 'to the fleet, were, in this view, to be avoided. If 'we had done this, time would have been given to 'make an effectual preparation against our passage, 'which any number of troops that we could spare 'would afterwards have been unable to assist in forcing. 'But nothing of this kind was required, or even 'hinted at, by Arbuthnott.* All he desired was, a 'strong squadron, as sure of its effect. This passed, 'as we had been encouraged to believe, without much 'difficulty or material loss; and if it afterwards failed 'from uncertainty and indecision, the fault is not ours.'

* British Ambassador to the Porte.

Sir John Duckworth's own despatches show that the prompt and decided operations which were intended by the Government, were in the power of the British fleet in the first instance, and that the opportunity was only lost by his own indecision and hesitation. He states in his official despatch, that for a few hours on Sunday (i. e., the day after his arrival) the wind was favourable for carrying the squadron under the walls of the Seraglio. And that entire success would have followed such prompt action on his part (which would indeed have been only in accordance with his instructions), we have the indisputable evidence of General Sebastiani, the French ambassador then at the Porte.

On the 4th of March, Sebastiani writes to the Duc de Raguse, then commanding in the Illyrian provinces: 'Mon Général, nous avons amusé les Anglais avec des 'négociations pendant tout le temps qui a été néces- 'saire pour mettre cette capitale en état de défense; 'mais dès que les ouvrages ont été terminés, la Porte 'a signifié à l'amiral Duckworth qu'elle ne pouvait 'accéder à aucune de ses demandes.' . . . 'Nous avons 'couru ici des dangers. Si l'amiral Anglais le lende- 'main, ou le sur-lendemain de son arrivée, avait tenté 'l'entrée du Port, nous ne pouvions lui opposer aucune 'résistance, et sa réussite était complète. Nous 'aurions reçu notre logement aux sept tours.'

If Sebastiani had reason to rejoice at an unexpected escape from the Seven Towers, Sir John Duckworth had

no less reason to congratulate himself on an escape from the Court Martial which surely awaited him (as I have often heard my father declare) had the Whig Ministry remained in office.

Of the expedition to South America, it is well known, that it was undertaken without orders from, or even the knowledge of, the Government at home; that the support given to it in the first instance, when the news of the opening successes reached England, was in fact forced upon the Ministers; and that they marked their disapprobation of the enterprise, by bringing Sir Home Popham, the chief author of it, to a Court Martial for having acted without instructions.

But on the subject of the last-named expedition, as well as upon that of distant operations generally, we have my father's opinion on record, in a minute drawn up by him at the time, and docketed as 'objections 'intended to have been submitted to the King, if the 'plan for more extended operations in South America 'had been persevered in.'

In that paper, after expressing his concurrence in the opinion that it was expedient to send out 'a general 'officer of higher rank to take the command of the 'troops in the River Plata,' with instructions, should Buenos Ayres have been retaken before his arrival, to keep possession of it till he can receive further instructions from home—and, in the meantime, to collect and transmit all the information he can as to the state and disposition of the country—he thus proceeds:—

'Here, I am afraid, my concurrence in the proposed 'measures ends. I have been from the beginning 'adverse to distant expeditions for the purpose of ex- 'tending our colonial possessions. They are neces- 'sarily attended with a further division of our force, 'and with a diminution of our means of acting in 'Europe. Whilst we are acquiring colonies, the 'enemy is subjugating the Continent; and though I 'am by no means disposed to raise doubts of our 'ability to maintain the contest in this manner, I can- 'not help fearing the effect of any system which might 'enable the French, either completely to subdue the 'remaining Powers of the Continent, or to engage them 'in opinion against this country. I believe a chief 'cause of our failure in the last war to have arisen from 'the want of a sufficient union amongst the members of 'the Confederacy against France; and we shall be 'again in danger of incurring the same evil, if, whilst 'our allies are calling upon us for assistance, we 'shall appear to be pursuing separate objects of our 'own.

'In Europe the most formidable danger exists. It 'is there that every effort should be made to stop the 'career of the enemy. Our interest and our reputa- 'tion are equally at stake. Our allies have a right to 'look to us for support, and our honour requires that 'we should not appear to be wanting to the common 'cause.

'With a view, therefore, to a continuance of the

'war on the Continent, I am strongly of opinion that 'we should immediately collect and prepare for em- 'barkation the largest possible British force that can 'be made applicable to such a service. The point to 'which this should ultimately be directed I cannot 'pretend now to indicate; either in the north of Ger- 'many, or the coast of Holland, or on that of France 'itself. Engaged as the French armies now are at an 'immense distance from their own frontier, there must, 'I think, if the war continues, arise opportunities of 'acting for which we ought to be prepared, either to 'assist Russia as a diversion, or to encourage Austria 'and Sweden to take an active part in the contest. . . . 'No time should, in my opinion, be lost in concerting 'the means for such an operation.'*

In a defensive point of view also my father thought that as large a force as possible should be kept in readiness at home, and that all further diminution of that force by 'distant expeditions' should be avoided. 'These opinions,' he proceeds, 'would undoubtedly 'have compelled me to object to an original expedi- 'tion for the purpose of making conquests in South

* Mr. Alison is loud in his censure of the Whig Ministry for not having assisted Russia before the battle of Friedland. But as Lord Grenville's Administration was dismissed two months before the navigation of the Baltic was open, he ought, in fairness, to attribute the blame of this inactivity to the succeeding Government. They found a considerable body of troops collected at Cork on their accession to office, but *not*, as evidently appears from the above Paper, intended, as Sir William Napier sneeringly insinuates, for 'Quixotic enterprises' in South America.

'America. Such an expedition being undertaken, 'though without the authority of Government, obliged 'us to support it, and I further acquiesced, though 'very reluctantly, in the expedition under General 'Craufurd, which was proposed as a consequence of 'that which had succeeded against Buenos Ayres, and 'with a view to securing the full advantage by a posi-'tion on the opposite coast, which might be derived 'from that conquest. In the same manner we must, 'if Buenos Ayres should already have been retaken, 'after a full view of all the circumstances neces-'sary for our information, decide upon the expe-'diency of retaining it. But if no attempt should 'have been made previous to the arrival of the officer 'proposed to be sent out, it becomes in some degree 'an original question, and all the objections which I 'have already stated apply to it.' . . . 'I feel my-'self compelled, therefore, to dissent from the pro-'posal contained in the minute of the Cabinet, being 'of opinion, if Buenos Ayres should not have been 'retaken, that no discretion should be left to the officer 'to be sent out to pursue that object. . . . 'That his 'instructions should be to send to St. Helena, to 'India, and to the Cape, whatever force may be re-'quired to supply the deficiency in these places; that 'if Maldonado should be found a tenable position, a 'sufficient garrison should be left to secure that posses-'sion as one which, from affording a good anchorage 'for our ships, may enable us to command the naviga-

'tion of the river La Plata.' . . . 'And that with the 'force which may remain after providing for these ob-'jects, he should be ordered immediately to return to 'England.'

While these events were in progress abroad, and before any tidings of the probable results could reach this country, the Administration of Lord Grenville had ceased to exist; and it affords another melancholy proof, amongst many, of carelessness, if not of something worse, in those who obtain the name of great historians, that Sir A. Alison says, in speaking of these events, that public confidence in the Government had '*already* been shaken' by these 'repeated 'failures abroad,' when the Catholic Question was raised on which the Administration broke up. The slightest attention to dates would have shown him that two of what he calls the failures had not even occurred, and that the news of the third could not have reached England till long after the dismissal of the Government.

That dismissal took place early in March 1807, in consequence of the endeavour of the Government to modify in a very slight degree the existing laws as they affected the Roman Catholics.

The claims of the Roman Catholics to an equality of civil rights with their Protestant fellow-subjects had long enlisted in their favour the sympathy and active exertions of those who were now the leading members of the Government. Lord Grenville had concurred

in 1801 in Mr. Pitt's resignation, on the ground of his inability to give effect to the expectations which had been held out to the Irish Roman Catholics during the discussions on the Union; but he had been no party to, or even cognisant of, the offer which, before the Addington Ministry was confirmed in office, Mr. Pitt had made to abandon the Catholic Question if allowed to retain the Government.*

Mr. Fox had ever been a strenuous supporter of the principle of religious as well as civil liberty. 'If,' he said, in explaining the principles on which he and his friends acted in the early years of the French revolution, 'If there were men dissatisfied in Scotland or 'Ireland on account of exemptions and disabilities, of 'unjust prejudices and cruel restrictions, I would repeal 'the penal statutes, which are a disgrace to our law 'books.' And in 1803 he had only been prevented by the opinion given by Mr. Grattan and Mr. George Ponsonby, that it was inexpedient at that time, from bringing on 'the question of Ireland,' with reference to the position of the Roman Catholics. He had acquiesced most reluctantly in the opinion thus given, and in writing to my father gave strong expression to the vexation he felt at what he termed the 'cowardice' of the party. My father warmly espoused the same

* Mr. Fox, in writing to my father on the 19th April 1804, to relate the purport of a conversation he had had with Lord Grenville, on the subject of Catholic Emancipation, mentions that, in the course of it, 'Lord Grenville confirmed the extraordinary fact of Pitt's never having 'told him of his offer to continue without it in 1801.'

views on this subject, and wrote in answer to these complaints of Mr. Fox: 'I do not wonder that you 'are vexed at being restrained from bringing on the 'Catholic Question; but do not give it up too hastily. 'What are Grattan's reasons? Do they convince 'you? If not, why not follow your own judgment?' At the same time he himself thought that the policy of bringing on the Question 'must depend—first on 'the wishes of the Catholics; and next on the proba- 'bility of its being well supported. . . It is a question,' he adds, 'on which you will, of course, be prepared 'for the old cant against disturbing the unanimity, 'which the general danger requires, by the introduc- 'tion of subjects of partial grievance. Of the unsound- 'ness and injustice of such pretences, which I should 'call foolish if they did not answer the purposes of 'those who use them, nobody can be more sensible 'than I am;—but they serve as an excuse for the 'wicked, and seldom fail to impose upon the weak. 'I should therefore be apprehensive that it will not 'be a very good question for a division, and in your 'view of the policy of moving it, it should be well 'considered whether the appearance of a strong deter- 'mination in the Court, and of a large majority in 'the House of Commons against them, would not be 'more likely to confirm the despair of the Catholics, 'than powerful arguments and respectable names, if 'supported only by small numbers, would be to 'encourage their hopes.'

These considerations, which had operated to prevent Mr. Fox and his party from moving the Catholic Question when in Opposition in 1803, operated equally, after the formation of Lord Grenville's Administration, to prevent the introduction by the Government of any general measure of relief for the Roman Catholics. Such a course was most reluctantly acquiesced in by my father and the other friends of the cause; but it was hopeless to expect to overcome the objections of the King to any such measure,—and the objections of the King being unfortunately supported by public opinion throughout England, it was felt that the consequence of moving prematurely in the question, would be, as my father wrote to the Duke of Bedford (then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland) in December 1806, 'to throw the Government into the hands of those 'who would be pledged to resist this great measure of 'conciliation, and the aggravation of all the dangers 'arising from the present state of the Catholic body, 'by throwing them into absolute despair.'

But while yielding most reluctantly to the obstacles which made it impossible to do full justice to the Catholics, my father turned his most anxious attention to the possibility of introducing other measures of practical benefit for the Irish people. 'Could 'nothing,' he asks the Duke of Bedford, 'short of 'Catholic emancipation, which might of itself afford 'considerable relief, and would have the incalculable 'advantage of showing a disposition in the Govern-

'ment to which the people of Ireland might look for 'greater future benefits, be attempted?'

Amongst other measures which he suggests in this view, was one for the amendment and modification of the Tithe System;—a system destined, for many years yet to come, to afford a fertile subject of declamation to the agitators who could not fail to spring up under the policy so long unfortunately and obstinately persevered in by succeeding Governments. It appeared to my father to be, as he said, 'the moment of all 'others, just after the suppression of the late dis-'turbances* by a vigorous but wholesome exertion 'of the legitimate powers of Government, in which 'some conciliatory measure should be attempted 'without delay. . . But to give this a fair chance of 'success,' he repeats, 'it would be necessary to 'obviate the designs of those who are always ready 'to aggravate in description (if not to foment in fact), 'the troubles of Ireland; by preventing any move-'ments on the part of the Catholic body, of which 'they would immediately avail themselves . . . 'Whether this can be done you are the best judge. 'But I am confident that nothing would tend more 'effectually to disable the Government from taking 'such measures as their inclinations or their policy 'would dictate, than any agitation of the Catholic

* The West of Ireland had been disturbed by some of those bands so often associated in that country, under various names, for purposes of nightly outrage and plunder. A Special Commission had been appointed to enforce the law, and had succeeded in restoring tranquillity.

'Question at the present moment. One of two things 'must be the inevitable consequence. Failure would 'be certain, and we should either continue in office 'weakened, and, to a certain extent, discredited, by 'the result of an ineffectual effort, or we should resign 'our situations to those who would come in on the 'avowed principle of supporting that system which 'has already been so fatal to the peace of Ireland.'

While, therefore, the Government was anxiously considering what measures it might be in their power to introduce with any chance of success for doing partial justice to the Roman Catholics; it was deemed essential to such success, to avoid any proceedings calculated still further to inflame that religious animosity against them, which was already so strongly excited in England. Above all it seemed desirable to prevent the presentation of a petition which had been proposed by Mr. Keogh in a most inflammatory speech, and adopted at an aggregate meeting of the Irish Roman Catholics. Of that speech Lord Grenville writes: that 'for its 'intemperance and inflammatory tendency' it had 'hardly ever been equalled.' And he adds of the general conduct of the Catholics—'They know that 'their petition cannot be carried; they contrive to 'embarrass the only public men who are friendly to 'their cause, and put upon us the necessity of either 'breaking up the Government for their sake, and 'giving it over into the hands of their avowed op-'ponents, or of ranging ourselves also in opposition, not

'to the cause itself, but to the time, and still more to the 'manner, in which it is brought forward, without having 'given Government the time even to deliberate upon 'it, much less the means of reconciling the innumerable 'difficulties which attend their cause; and, above all, 'to the public avowal of the sentiments and language 'of Mr. Keogh, which of themselves are enough, with-'out any other cause, to create insurmountable ob-'stacles to success here.'

All the endeavours of the Irish Government to stop the presentation of this petition having proved vain, Lord Grenville appealed through my father to Lord Ponsonby (my mother's brother), requesting him to go over to Ireland and exert the influence which 'the 'confidence that had been placed in his father and his 'family' by the Irish Roman Catholics, would give him, to prevent a step which would not only be embarrassing to the Government, but positively injurious to the cause of the Catholics themselves. 'Your 'Lordship's opinion and advice,' Lord Grenville writes to Lord Ponsonby, 'must on every account have great 'weight with the temperate and considerate part of 'the Catholic body in Ireland. . . . There can be no 'hope, founded on any of the circumstances which 'affected the discussion of this question in the last 'Parliament, that it could now be renewed with a 'better chance of success, and the evil it would in-'evitably produce is great and obvious. Whatever 'of prejudice or clamour has been at any former time

'excited against this measure, would be much in-
'creased by the intemperance of the course now pur-
'sued. . . . An impression generally unfavourable to
'the conduct of the Catholics would thus be created;
'no part of the former opposition to their wishes would
'be softened; many fresh persons would be pledged
'against them; and even their warmest advocates
'must acknowledge, in this instance, a total want of
'that temper, moderation, and discretion, which on a
'former occasion they were enabled justly to applaud.'

'The Catholic Question' my father writes at the same time to Mr. George Ponsonby (then Lord Chancellor of Ireland) 'certainly came upon us with little
'previous preparation. We were discussing the ques-
'tion of tithes as one, the arrangement of which might
'most essentially contribute to the peace and security
'of Ireland. . . . And so striking a proof of the dis-
'position of Government to consult the interests, and
'to attend to the feelings of the people of Ireland, I
'cannot help believing might have materially assisted
'us under the difficulties which must attend the appli-
'cation of the Catholics, though it could not be con-
'sidered as an immediate concession to them.' Having then shown the hopelessness of Government being enabled to carry the measures which had been suggested as concessions to the Catholics, in order to induce them to withhold the threatened Petition, he proceeds: 'If, then, the Catholic petition can only be
'averted by such concessions, independently of the

'objections to making *any* concession upon such a prin-
'ciple, no hope can any longer be entertained of keep-
'ing it back.* We must then look to the consequences
'of the renewed agitation of this measure, and these I
'have already stated to you. They can be productive
'of nothing but mischief, and chiefly of mischief to the
'interests of the Catholics themselves. There is no
'possible view of the case in which *they* must not be
'the losers. They can hope to gain no new advocates
'to their cause. Some even of those who have for-
'merly supported them may, very possibly, on account
'of the manner in which the measure is brought for-
'ward, withdraw their assistance; all must lament its
'premature and ill-advised discussion at the present
'moment; and those members of the Government who
'have hitherto given the most unequivocal proofs of a
'favourable disposition to the cause of the Catholics,
'may perhaps be divided amongst themselves, but
'must inevitably be exposed to the necessity of
'choosing between a line of conduct which may occa-
'sion suspicions of their sincerity, or of breaking up
'the Administration.'

'If all attempts,' he writes on the same day to the Duke of Bedford, 'either to stop or give a different cha-
'racter to the Petition should fail, what must be done

* Lord Grenville also says in the letter to Lord Ponsonby above quoted:—'It would be wholly improper, for the purpose of presenting 'a petition, to hold out to the Catholics any other inducements than 'those which arise out of a calm and unprejudiced consideration of what 'their own interests and those of the empire at large so evidently re-'quire.'

'by those who are pledged to the support of the Catholic 'claims must become a subject of the most deliberate 'and anxious consideration. I will not now anticipate 'the decision; but I cannot say less than that the bring-'ing forward the Petition must endanger the continu-'ance of the present Government, as at present formed, 'or at least *my* continuing to be a member of it.'

On the 6th of March, the day after he had moved for leave to bring in a Bill for the admission of Roman Catholics into the army and navy, he writes to Lord Ponsonby, and again enlarges on the difficulties that, in the existing temper of the Parliament and the country, would inevitably follow perseverance on the part of the Irish Catholics in the course they were pursuing. 'We have had two debates,' he says, 'one on 'the extended grant to Maynooth, and the other on 'the introduction of the Bill yesterday, which have 'exhibited on the part of our opponents such a spirit 'of illiberality and bigotry, as would have been worthy 'of the darkest ages of superstition and intolerance. 'In my language I was studious to show the Catholics 'that they had real friends in Government; and the 'result of the debates, to those who view them with a 'rational desire to regulate their proceedings according 'to honest principles, and who do not look to objects 'of personal ambition, must, I think, be to prove that 'the introduction of the Petition at this moment, in 'addition to all the other difficulties attending it, must 'be to furnish a new occasion to those who are de-

'sirous of raising a Protestant cry, to embarrass their 'true friends, and materially to injure their own cause.'

The language used by my father in the debate on the extended grant to Maynooth, to which he alludes above, was as follows: 'he fully agreed that we had 'too long neglected to take the situation of Ireland 'seriously into consideration. He confessed that we 'were deeply criminal for the part we had acted, 'but he also hoped we should begin to discharge the 'long arrears against us. For his own part, he can-'didly avowed that he should feel that the proudest 'and happiest day of his life, when he should be able 'to set about the work of making up for the time which 'had been misspent with respect to Ireland.'

Lord Ponsonby's endeavours to prevent the presentation of the Petition were ultimately successful; but before that result was finally attained, the mischief which moving the question at all had been calculated to produce had been done, and the Whig Ministry had been dismissed.

Amongst the measures which the Government had designed for the relief and conciliation of the Irish Catholics, short of complete emancipation, and which they might reasonably entertain hopes of being able to carry, was one for the admission of Roman Catholics into the army and navy. A Bill for that purpose had been introduced by my father on the 5th of March,*

* It had first been proposed to effect the object by the addition of two clauses to the Mutiny Bill, but had afterwards been thought better to introduce a separate Bill for the purpose.

in the debate upon which, he writes to Lord Ponsonby in the same letter from which an extract has been given above: 'I think I completely succeeded in 'checking the effect of Perceval's attempt to raise a 'flame on the Catholic Question. In my reply last 'night I had the House very much with me; and our 'victory upon Birch's motion in the Common Council,* 'was better than my hopes. It leads to a well-founded 'expectation that, by degrees, the public opinion may 'be brought round;—but not to defeat this, it is 'necessary above all things that the Catholics should be 'patient for the present. There exist the materials 'of inflammation—there are incendiaries to take ad- 'vantage of them, and the slightest spark struck out 'by an intemperate act, might produce the worst 'effects.'

The hopes which the success of this first night's debate, and the proceedings in the City had raised, were soon extinguished. Before the day fixed for the second reading of the Bill, my father again writes, March 12th: 'The Court is taking an active part 'against my Bill for the introduction of Catholics into 'the army and navy; and my opinion is at present 'that the Government will break up.'

This note was occasioned by a communication which Lord Sidmouth seems to have made this day (the 12th

* Mr. Birch brought forward a motion in the Common Council on the subject of 'Lord Howick's alarming notice,' which was negatived by a majority of seventeen.

of March), to my father, of the conversations which he had had with the King on the subject. Lord Sidmouth was known to be opposed to the measure, and had indeed tendered his resignation. But it appears that he had not waited for its acceptance to communicate with Mr. Perceval, and even to concert with him the means of defeating the Bill.

Doubts had indeed before arisen, whether the King quite understood the full extent to which it was proposed to go by this Bill. At all events, he pleaded such ignorance as a reason for objecting, after the introduction of the measure, to certain of its provisions. Whether this ignorance could be *fairly* pleaded, —though the historians of the day have for the most part admitted the plea, and, Tory in their politics, have sedulously echoed the cry that the King was deceived by his Ministers,—may be well doubted.

Before the introduction of the measure, a despatch had been written by my father (in the absence of Lord Spencer, the Home Secretary) to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland,* for the express purpose of calling the King's attention to the difference between it and the Irish Act of 1793. He had also verbally explained the measure to His Majesty on the 4th of March, and left him under the impression that he had

* The Irish Act, in opening the army to Catholics, did not allow of their rising beyond the rank of Colonels. They could not be Generals on the Staff. The distinction was felt to be not only invidious but useless—as a Catholic might, as a Colonel, command as large a body of troops as if he had been a General.

his consent—a reluctant one, certainly, but still his consent—to proceed. On the 5th March, the Bill was accordingly introduced; and on the 6th of March, the day following, my father writes to the Duke of Bedford: 'You will perhaps have been surprised at my despatch 'the other day, which I had not time to accompany 'by any private explanation. It was written for the 'purpose of attracting the King's attention to the '*extent* of the measure we proposed, which there was 'some reason to apprehend that he might not under-'stand to proceed further than the Act of the Irish 'Parliament.'

And from this day till the 12th of March, when my father wrote the note above-mentioned to Lord Ponsonby—that is, during a whole week, while the conversations with Lord Sidmouth were taking place—not one word was said, nor any hint given, in any of the interviews which Lord Grenville had with the King, to lead the former to suppose that His Majesty's objections to the Bill were insuperable.

It seems hard to imagine that, on a subject on which, above all others, he took a deep if not an absorbing interest, and with regard to a measure to the introduction of which he had in the first instance consented with the greatest reluctance, the King should not have made himself thoroughly acquainted with its provisions; but it is still more difficult to believe that, when his attention was specially called to the subject by a despatch written for the express purpose of clear-

ing up any misapprehension he might be under, as to the nature and extent of the measure to which he had given his assent,—he should, contrary to his well-known habits of industrious and laborious attention to public business, have passed that despatch over in so careless a manner, as still to remain in ignorance of the intentions of his Ministers; more particularly as the subject to which the despatch in question related, had been for some time matter for discussion between the King and his Ministers. As early as the 10th of February, Lord Grenville, speaking of the changes in the Mutiny Act, which it was proposed to make in favour of the Roman Catholics, says: 'In this form a 'despatch was drawn, and was last night submitted to 'the King, whose answer, received this morning, is 'perfectly calm and collected, but such as to leave no 'hope of his consenting even to this measure.'

The next day, however, he adds, 'I have just time 'to tell you that the business I mentioned yesterday 'is, I trust, in a train of being satisfactorily arranged.'

Whether or not the King had really misunderstood the extent of the measure to which he had given his sanction, the objections, now raised by him, made the re-consideration of the Bill, with a view to its possible modification, a matter of necessity. 'It is im-'possible for me,' my father again writes to Lord 'Ponsonby (March 17th), 'at this moment to enter into 'a detailed explanation of the embarrassing circum-'stances in which we are placed. I can only say that

'we are under the necessity of giving up some parts of 'the Bill; but that I have very great doubts whether 'even this disposition to concede will enable the 'Government to go on.' The event proved that this fear was only too well founded. Even the total withdrawal of the Bill, 'a sacrifice,' my father writes to the Duke of Bedford, 'he had brought himself to 'make in deference to the opinion of his colleagues, 'and of a great majority of their friends in Parlia-'ment, and, as he believed, of the public in general,' did not suffice; and on the 19th he thus announces to Lord Ponsonby the dissolution of the Administration: 'I have only a moment to say that things are 'now brought to a crisis, and that the Administration 'may be considered at an end. I have not time for 'the detail of the circumstances which have led to 'this, but the result, after all that has happened, is 'the only one under which I could have felt com-'fortable. We had, contrary I confess to my opinion, 'agreed to give up the Bill; but, upon reserving the 'liberty of proposing such measures as we might here-'after find necessary, the King declared, in an answer 'received this morning, his positive determination 'never to concede anything, and required from us a 'promise not to propose any further concessions to 'him. To this, of course, there can be only one 'answer, which we meet for the purpose of framing 'to-night, and to-morrow I hope the thing will be de-'termined in such a manner as to admit of its being 'made public.'

The demand made by the King, named above, and on the refusal of which he announced his intention of changing his Ministers, came as a most unexpected and welcome relief to my father. It was with the greatest reluctance that he had given his consent to the withdrawal of the Bill he had introduced. In giving way on that point to the opinion of his colleagues, 'The consideration,' he writes to the Duke of Bedford, 'which weighed most with me was the state of Ireland, 'and the danger of adding to all the bad effects of so 'severe a disappointment to the Catholics, the cala- 'mity of establishing a Government there founded on 'principles of exclusion. The evil of this was strongly 'urged by Grattan, and his opinion against our resig- 'nation was earnestly pressed. The consciousness, 'however, of acting from these motives did not recon- 'cile me to the measure we had taken. Notwithstand- 'ing all that could be urged in their favour, I had a '*feeling* which argument and reason assailed in vain, 'and which told me that the character and the strength 'of the Government must both be materially impaired 'by such a concession. From the time I had con- 'sented to it, I never had a happy moment; and 'personally I stood in a more unpleasant situation 'than my colleagues, being so publicly committed, 'both by the despatch which, in Lord Spencer's ab- 'sence, I had written to you, and by the introduction 'of the Bill into Parliament.

'You may imagine, then, the relief I have found in 'the conclusion of this business by the King's requir-

'ing us to withdraw the reserve we had made of entire 'freedom in the advice we might hereafter find it 'necessary to give respecting Ireland, and to give him 'an assurance that no proposal connected with this 'subject should be made to him in future. This left 'us no alternative; and our answer conveyed, in 'respectful but decided terms, our inability to comply 'with a demand so incompatible with our duty.

'The result shortly is, that the Government is at an 'end, and that we consider ourselves as only holding 'our offices till the King has made his arrange-'ments.'

On the same day my father wrote to Lord Ponsonby, in answer to a letter in which the latter strongly condemned the concessions to which the Government had consented in even modifying the Bill for the admission of Roman Catholics into the army and navy. 'I 'entirely concur with you,' he says, 'in the feelings 'and opinions you express upon the concessions we 'were induced to offer. I yielded to the opinions of 'others, more particularly those of Grattan, and to 'the fear of re-establishing an Orange Government 'in Ireland. I therefore regard our present situation 'as a great escape from the concession which we had 'offered, and of which, notwithstanding the powerful, 'and I may add conscientious, motives which had in-'duced me to acquiesce in it, I never could bear to 'think from the moment I had consented to it.'

On the 23rd March my father stated, with the King's

permission, in answer to a question put to him, that though he had not yet received His Majesty's command to 'deliver up the seals of his office, he had 'reason to believe, from such facts as are generally 'known to the public, that His Majesty had sent for 'persons not at present in the number of his servants,' 'for the purpose of making arrangements for a new 'Administration.' It was not, however, till the 26th that Lord Grenville in the House of Lords and my father in the House of Commons were enabled to announce the actual dissolution of the Government, and to explain the circumstances which had led to it.

Thus ended the Liberal Administration of 1806; and, considering the question which was the immediate cause of its downfall, it is curious to observe that in 1817 Lord Sidmouth, as member of Lord Liverpool's Administration, himself introduced a measure, as my father described it, 'in substance and effect neither 'more nor less than that for proposing which the Ad-'ministration of 1807 went out of office,' in producing which result Lord Sidmouth himself, as we have seen, was an active agent. It was a Bill for placing Roman Catholics, as regarded oaths, on the same footing as other Dissenters—a Captain Wright, of the navy, having complained in a petition to Parliament, presented by my father, that having been promoted to the rank of commander, the oath imposed on Roman Catholics had prevented his deriving any advantage from his promotion.

The formation of the new Administration, of which the Duke of Portland was placed at the head, does not appear to have been exempt from difficulty; and before the arrangements for effecting it were definitively concluded, my father writes: 'I am not without some apprehension, from the fears which appear to prevail in the Court, that, notwithstanding the King's apparent determination, an attempt may be made to compromise matters in some way or other. This would be exceedingly perplexing; but, I hope I may add with confidence, that there will be no disposition in any of the members of the Cabinet who have concurred in this point, to consent to retain their places but on such terms as would carry with them their own justification to the public.'

Even after the formation of the new Government, it did not appear impossible that events might lead to the old Ministers being recalled to office. 'I do not think it very probable,' my father writes to Mr. George Ponsonby, 'that the King will easily be brought to resort to us again;' but in the very unlikely event of his doing so, it was desirable, he thought, to ascertain at once 'what might be expected from the Catholics.' Sincerely attached as he was to the principles of religious liberty involved in the question of Catholic emancipation, and firmly impressed with the conviction of the necessity for the safety and tranquillity of Ireland that that question should be set at rest in the only way in which it was possible effectually to set it

at rest, yet he saw and admitted the hopelessness of success in that object during the lifetime of the King, supported as the King was in his objections to any concessions to the Catholics by the general feeling of the country. He therefore put the question to Mr. George Ponsonby, whether the Catholics 'after the 'experience now acquired, might not think it better, 'for their own interest, to abandon for the present all 'endeavour to obtain any concession whatever beyond 'those already granted, and to express their wish that 'we should accept of office without any other means 'of serving them than those to be found in our own 'disposition and the present state of the existing 'laws.'

As to the mode of communicating with the Catholics, he adds, 'that care should be taken to do 'nothing which might give ground for a suspicion that 'we are desirous of office, and anxious to be courted 'to resume it. God knows, nothing is further from my 'thoughts and from my wishes. It is no bed of roses 'which we have left, and I can say to you what to 'another might expose me to the charge of insincerity 'and affectation, that what I am now doing is at- 'tended with a considerable sacrifice of my personal 'ease, from motives of public duty.'

It is perfectly unnecessary to defend my father from the charge that has sometimes been made against Lord Grenville's Ministry, that in refraining from bringing in a measure to give effect to the opinions and prin-

ciples professed by them in Opposition, they were actuated by an unworthy love of office. His whole career, and more particularly the sacrifice of all hope of power which he made to this very question for the next three and twenty years, is a sufficient refutation, as far as he is concerned, of any such imputation. His sole desire, both in acquiescing in the non-introduction of any general measure of emancipation by the Government of which he was a member, and in the suggestions he now made to Mr. Ponsonby, was that that course should be adopted which should appear most advantageous to the Catholics themselves.

Thus he writes (certainly in no factious spirit of opposition to the new Government) after the dismissal of the Grenville Ministry: 'I am more anxious than 'ever that the Catholics should, if possible, be kept 'quiet. Their hasty proceedings, and above all, the 'speech of Keogh, have not only produced the dissolu- 'tion of the Administration, but have indisposed the 'mind of the public here towards them to a degree 'that will not easily be recovered. The only chance 'of repairing the unfortunate consequences of the 'measures into which they have been so unadvisedly 'hurried, will be to show now the greatest patience 'and moderation. I, therefore, anxiously hope that 'they will not, on account of what has happened, 'press for a discussion in Parliament on their petition. 'Surely our sincerity has been sufficiently proved to 'give us some title to their confidence, and the sacri-

'fice we have made establishes some claim upon them 'for attention to our advice. It is for their sake more 'than our own that I am induced most strongly to 'press this request, a compliance with which can 'alone, in my opinion, afford us a hope of serving them 'more effectually hereafter.'

How easy would it have been for my father, and how much more consonant with the usual tactics of an out-going Minister, to have endeavoured to inflame instead of to soothe the minds of the Irish Catholics under a sense of disappointment, with a view to the embarrassment of his successors in office! But neither the embarrassment of an adversary, nor the mere triumph of his own party, were ever actuating motives with my father during any part of his public career.

Before dismissing the subject of Ireland at this period, it may be mentioned that the system of conciliation at all times so strongly advocated by my father, was not intended by him to apply only to the Roman Catholics. All parties, he thought, should have equal justice done to them. None, not even the Orangemen, should have just cause to complain of exclusion. In putting an end to the domination of one party which had been exercised with such fatal results to the peace of Ireland, he had no wish to establish what would probably be the equally mischievous domination of another, and hence, probably, the secret of the unrelenting animosity with which, after full justice had been done to the Roman Catholics, he was in after

years assailed, as the reward for all the sacrifices he had made for them, by the leaders of that party.

The moderate and conciliatory spirit in which he wished the Irish Government to be conducted, is strongly exemplified by a letter which my father wrote to Lord Ponsonby with reference to the election for the city of Cork in October 1806. Lord Ponsonby had written on that occasion: 'If you 'leave a Government of such pure skim milk you 'will lose all your old trusty friends. They are 'more afraid of the clamour of a clerk than of 'abandoning the best, firmest, and most powerful of 'their supporters.' . . . 'I really am quite disgusted. 'I am favoured with plenty of fine speeches, &c., but 'power is always, somehow or other, exerted against 'us, . . . and I seriously believe that there is not 'one of the immense class of underlings who lives or 'respects the Government,—a Government which has 'supported them against the voice of millions who 'demanded justice, and, I am sorry to add, at the 'expense of its own honour.'

To this my father replies:—

'Nothing will do if the system of conciliation on 'which the Duke of Bedford very truly says the present 'Government was formed is not pursued. Even to-'wards the Orangemen it must be adopted; for if, by 'a proscription of them, we force them to maintain 'themselves as a distinct party, looking to a change 'of Government again to give them the ascendancy,

'all hope of permanent tranquillity for Ireland must 'fail. It ought to be our policy to prolong the effect 'of any measures we may be able to carry beyond our 'own Administration, which cannot be done if the 'country is to be kept divided between two inveterate 'parties, alternately gaining power, according to the 'changes which may take place in England. It 'was, therefore, not so much with a view to the ease 'and convenience of the Administration, as for the 'sake of Ireland itself, that we originally wished to 'conciliate the leaders of a party, whose principles 'and conduct you cannot more strongly condemn 'than I do.'

And writing to the Duke of Bedford at the same time on the subject of Lord Ponsonby's complaints, he says: 'On the general policy of conciliation, and 'indeed of the necessity of doing away, as much as 'possible, all former animosities, which cannot be 'effected if either party is to be absolutely proscribed, 'nobody can more cordially agree with you than I do. 'You say truly it was the principle on which this 'Government was formed, and which was even more 'necessary in Ireland than here.' Still he considered that there must be some limit to such a policy: 'and I 'confess,' he proceeds, '(and this I know was Fox's 'opinion,) that it would be carrying this policy too far, 'and perhaps risking its proposed effect, if the direct 'countenance and support of Government was given to 'any persons remarkably prominent in the cruelties

'committed at the time of the rebellion: at least till 'the people had had some reason to place entire con- 'fidence in the Administration, and till the altered 'conduct of these persons had rendered them less 'obnoxious.'

It has been mentioned that notwithstanding the patriotic and disinterested nature of the motives which alone influenced the members of Lord Grenville's Government in the course which they adopted with regard to the Catholics, both as to what they did, and what they did not attempt, they were attacked for the apparent inconsistency of their conduct in office with the opinions which they had professed and advocated in Opposition.* And some years later, in writing to Lord Holland on the occasion of a motion which he had made, and in which he had given expression to some strong opinions, my father alluded to what had happened in 1807, to Lord Grenville's Administration, and to the experience thus gained, as teaching a lesson which future Oppositions would do well to profit by. 'Though I admit,' he writes, 'the complete accuracy 'of all you say as to your known opinions and inten- 'tions on this subject, I could have wished that you 'had not made the motion. I have now had between 'twenty and thirty years' experience of discussions of

* Attacks of a very different nature were made upon them by some of the subordinate members of their own Administration, who could see nothing in what had occurred but the loss of their salaries, and they indulged their vexation by sneering at those who not only knocked their heads gratuitously against a wall, but who built up the very wall for the purpose.

'this nature; and unless they are likely to meet with 'even more popular support than hitherto has followed 'them, that experience would serve to prove that their 'principal effect has been to give to Government ad- 'ditional facilities in the prosecution of the very mea- 'sures they are intended to counteract. But their bad 'effects do not stop here; and the Administration of '1806 furnishes a further instance of the sort of attack 'to which you will be exposed both from the Court 'and the democrats, . . if you do not, when in Govern- 'ment, carry into formal effect all the measures which 'you have urged in Opposition. It is in vain that 'you carry on a Government in the true spirit of those 'measures—that you are moderate, forbearing, and 'liberal. If you do not force their literal execution, 'if you enter into any compromise with those whom 'you have formerly opposed; in a word, if you do 'not make it utterly impossible to form an Adminis- 'tration in which you can take any share; you will be 'branded as an apostate. This happened to your 'uncle and me in 1806; and the same fate will be ex- 'perienced by you unless you determine to sacrifice 'every other good that may be within your reach, for 'points in which many with whom you are connected 'could not concur, though in the practical conduct of 'the Government there would be no difference between 'you.

'The lesson that I have learnt, therefore, is to '*pledge myself to as little as possible whilst in Opposition,*

'and, when in Government, if ever it should be my 'lot to be again in that situation, *to do as much as I can.*'

But though inculcating upon the Roman Catholics themselves, and upon their supporters in Parliament, the necessity of the utmost moderation in their conduct, my father soon convinced himself that the power of settling the Catholic Question must in future be made a sine quâ non condition of his own return to office. And in 1809, he writes to Lord Grenville that his mind was made up, '*I think, unalterably*, not 'to take office unless the power of *immediately* propos- 'ing measures for the conciliation of Ireland be con- 'ceded to us.'

This determination on his part, consistently adhered to as it was, resulted in his exclusion from office for upwards of three and twenty years.

To return to the events of March 1807.

The explanations relative to the change of Government had been made by Lord Grenville and my father, as already stated, on the 26th of March; but the new Ministers in the House of Commons were necessarily absent at that time on account of their elections, and it was not till the 8th of April, that the subject came to a formal discussion on a resolution moved by Mr. Brand, 'that it was contrary to the first duties of 'the confidential servants of the Crown, to restrain 'themselves by any pledge, express or implied, from offering to the King any advice that the course of cir- 'cumstances might render necessary for the welfare

'and security of any part of His Majesty's extensive 'empire.'

It was with reference to the probability of this resolution being carried that my father wrote, as already noticed, to Mr. George Ponsonby, to ascertain what the wishes of the Catholics would be in the event, improbable but not impossible, of their being recalled to the Government. The motion was seconded by Mr. William Lamb, the late Lord Melbourne; and being met by the 'previous question,' was rejected by a majority of two hundred and fifty-eight to two hundred and twenty-six.

In the course of the debate on Mr. Brand's resolution, my father alluded to the belief which he could not help entertaining, that the course taken by the King upon the measure proposed by the Government, had been concerted with certain members of the Opposition. Whether this were so or not must ever remain a subject of controversy and speculation for the curious in history, on which every one will decide according to his political bias. It certainly is remarkable, as I have already observed, that though my father (in addition to the despatch to the Duke of Bedford, before alluded to) had personally explained to the King the difference between the proposed measure and the old Irish Act of 1793, of which it was an extension; though he had introduced the measure under the impression that at that interview he had obtained the King's consent,—'an unwilling consent certainly,' but

still his consent,—to proceed; though a week had elapsed since the introduction of the Bill, during which His Majesty had had more than one interview with Lord Grenville, the head of the Ministry; it certainly is remarkable, considering how strong the King's feelings upon this subject were supposed to be, that during all this time no hint was given of the objections he entertained to the measure being insuperable. Surely something must have happened between the 5th March, when my father introduced the Bill, and the 12th, when he wrote to Lord Ponsonby that the 'Court was taking an active part against it,' to give activity to these objections. At all events it is known that on the 14th, the Saturday before the pledge was demanded, on the refusal of which the Government was dismissed, Lord Eldon had an interview with the King. 'What passed at that interview,' my father said, in his speech on the 9th of April, 'he did not 'pretend to state, He would leave the House to 'conjecture.' Lord Eldon, indeed, denies that at that interview, either he or the King once alluded to a subject which both were known to have equally at heart! It is surely not very uncharitable, however, to doubt the truth of this denial; particularly as it is certain that Lord Sidmouth, a member of the Cabinet, was already in communication with the Opposition, with a view to the defeat of the measure; and Lord Eldon's conduct in 1804, in aiding Mr. Pitt to overturn the Government of which he was himself a mem-

ber, shows that he was capable of plotting not only against an Administration to which he was openly and avowedly opposed, but against one to which he himself belonged.*

'I have said nothing,' my father writes to the Duke of Bedford, 'of Lord Sidmouth. His opinions on the 'general question are well known. His consent to the 'Bill I believe was originally given under a misappre-'hension of its extent. When the point was cleared 'up, he stated his objections, but did not, to my ap-'prehension, express an intention of separating from 'the Government, or making a decided opposition to 'it in Parliament. This intention, however, he soon 'afterwards manifested, and accompanied it by an 'offer to resign. So far there is nothing to complain 'of. But he has since acknowledged that during this 'interval, when he had been desired by Lord Grenville 'to suspend his resignation, and when the means of 'accommodation were under discussion, he had a direct 'communication with Perceval, which originated in a 'proposal made by him to concert their measures in 'opposition to the Bill.'

Lord Sidmouth had also had several conversations on the subject of the Bill with the King, and was, indeed, the first to tell my father of His Majesty's strong objections to it. Is it probable that, in those conversations, he had left the King in ignorance of his own sentiments with respect to it, or of the means he

* See page 85.

was taking to defeat it?—and does not this make it still more improbable that nothing passed on the subject in the interview between the King and Lord Eldon?

This however is, as I have said, a matter of speculation, which every one must decide for himself.

The new Ministers had been supported in two great trials of strength in the House of Commons, by majorities of thirty-two and forty-six in full Houses, with every probability too that this would prove a growing majority, as they became confirmed in power. Notwithstanding this, however, and though the existing Parliament had only been called in the preceding October, it was considered desirable to take advantage of the 'No Popery' cry which had been most industriously excited through the country, in order still further to strengthen the new Government; and accordingly before the end of April, Parliament was again dissolved.

The event fully answered the expectation of Ministers—and on the first great trial of strength, which took place in the new Parliament upon an amendment to the Address, moved by my father, the Government showed an array of three hundred and fifty supporters against only one hundred and fifty-five opponents.

My father had himself lost the seat for Northumberland, which he had retained ever since his first return to Parliament, one-and-twenty years before. An opposition had most unexpectedly sprung up, which

he had no reason to anticipate, having been assured by the Duke of Northumberland that he wished the county not to be disturbed. He had, therefore, delayed his departure from London, and had adopted no steps for canvassing the county, when he was taken by surprise by the information that, on the pretence of a requisition, set on foot apparently by the Duke's own agents, Lord Percy had been suddenly brought forward; and that, in a way to insure a doubtful and expensive contest to my father, if he chose to persevere in it.

Lord Percy had supported the late Government, and had been brought in by their influence, on the death of Mr. Fox, for Westminster. He had even spoken in favour of Mr. Brand's motion above referred to, though he had in the course of that speech expressed opinions unfavourable to concessions to the Catholics. But now, by the course pursued by the Duke's tenantry, in withholding their second votes from my father, and by Lord Percy's own advertisement, in which the ostentatious profession of his attachment to the 'Constitution in *Church* and State,' was an apparent echo of the cry which had been raised of 'Danger to the Church'—the movement in the county seemed directed particularly against my father's seat. The result was that the latter found, as his canvass proceeded, that 'there was no hope of his 'success.' 'At least,' as he writes to Lord Grenville, 'without an expense which, in justice to my family, I

'could in no case encounter; but which, with my 'precarious tenure in the House of Commons, would 'be quite madness.'

He, therefore, withdrew from the representation of his native county, and was returned, by the influence of Lord Thanet, for Appleby, for which borough he sat for the few months during which he still continued a member of the House of Commons. The speech in which he took leave of his late constituents was long remembered in the county, and the enthusiastic demonstrations of popular respect and attachment with which that farewell was responded to, were well calculated to soothe the mortification which could not but attend the loss of a seat he had so long held.

Mr. Ord, member for Newcastle, and himself a consistent Whig, thus describes the termination of the election:—'May 19, 1807. Well, it is all over! 'Poor dear Lord Howick has given it up in a speech 'that harrowed one's very soul, and roused alternately 'all one's passions—of admiration for him, of hatred for 'his vile betrayers, and of contempt for the miserable 'wretches that were opposed to him. The multitude 'were affected to the greatest possible degree of en- 'thusiasm. They would not bear to hear of another 'name than Howick. . . . Sir Charles Monck moved 'the thanks of the county to Lord Howick for his long 'and faithful services, which was carried unanimously.'

My father attended regularly in his place during the short Session that followed the meeting of the new

Parliament, and stoutly defended the course which had been adopted by the late Government with respect to Ireland, and their refusal to take the unconstitutional pledge demanded from them by the King; and almost the last words he ever spoke in the House of Commons were in recommendation of that conciliatory policy for which he and his friends had forfeited office. In moving an amendment to the Address in answer to the Speech from the Throne, on the 23rd of June, 'he 'earnestly pressed His Majesty's Ministers to attend to 'the advice of an honourable gentleman, unfortunately 'no longer a member of that House, the late Attorney-'General for Ireland, Mr. Plunket, to make Ireland 'the first and the last object of their thoughts. Too 'much anxiety could not be shown on this subject. He 'should be glad to hear that some system of conciliation 'was proposed. He did not allude to any extension 'of indulgences, but to other regulations which would 'tranquillize the people.'

And, again, on the 6th July, he repeated that 'he 'considered that part of the empire as the most im-'perative in its calls for attention and care; and 'though he would not say that any measure of 'Catholic indulgence should now be brought forward, 'he would say that good policy called for a general 'system of conciliation and kindness.'

On the 14th of August Parliament was prorogued, and with the close of the Session terminated my father's career in the House of Commons. His

father's health had long been failing. On the 10th November he grew suddenly worse, and his death on the 16th, finally removed my father from the place where his presence was more than ever required, as events soon proved, to control and regulale the proceedings of the combined Opposition.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM MY FATHER'S REMOVAL TO THE HOUSE OF LORDS IN NOVEMBER 1807 TO END OF SESSION OF 1809.

MY father now took his seat in the House of Lords by the side of Lord Grenville, as the leader of the Whig section of the Opposition, but with a vastly diminished power of effecting any good. The influence of the House of Lords was, even at that time, comparatively small, and the House of Commons was then, as it is now, the place where the fate of Ministers was decided, and, with them, the nature of our national policy.

In that House the loss of my father's influence was not long in making itself felt. Formed as the Opposition was of parties between which, on many important questions, a considerable difference of opinion existed, it had required all his tact and judgment during the Session of 1807, to prevent these differences from becoming apparent. Without a recognized leader in the House of Commons, there seemed no hope of preserving anything like unity of action; but though all

parties appeared equally convinced of the absolute necessity of such an appointment, it had proved no easy matter to induce them to agree as to the person by whom it should be filled. To reconcile conflicting claims, to soothe jealousies, to satisfy the exigencies of vanity and self-conceit, was no whit easier fifty years ago than it has proved in our own times; and it was not without the greatest difficulty, and only after much discussion, that an unwilling acquiescence had been brought about in the nomination—as the best which under the circumstances of the time could be made—of Mr. George Ponsonby (the late Chancellor of Ireland) to succeed my father as Leader of the Opposition in the House of Commons.

If it had been found no easy task to obtain general consent to this arrangement, it proved still more difficult to procure obedience or deference to the authority it had thus been agreed to set up; and it soon became apparent that the parties composing the Opposition in the House of Commons were little disposed to own the control of any leader. All seemed bent on pushing their separate views and opinions, without regard to circumstances or seasons, and thus all assisted in giving increased strength to the Government it was the professed common object of all to oppose!

Lord Grenville had long foreseen this state of things. While still in office he had looked to the expected removal of my father from the House of Commons as likely to break up the Administration,

and now that they were in Opposition, he saw still less hope of matters being so conducted in that House, as to make it probable that the good understanding which had been hitherto maintained, not without some difficulty, could be long preserved. In contemplation, therefore, of the differences which he anticipated, he had, before the opening of the Session of 1808, expressed a strong desire to withdraw from anything like a constant attendance in Parliament, a desire which, shortly before his own departure from Howick to attend the House of Lords, my father thus combats: 'What,' he writes to Lord Grenville, January 3rd, 1808, 'will be the consequence of your relin-
'quishing that active superintendence of a numerous
'party, which, however painful it may be at such a
'moment, I wish to inspire you with a belief is a
'duty from which you cannot, without hereafter find-
'ing reason to blame your conduct, withdraw your-
'self? Though you are absent, you must be aware
'that others will continue their attendance. If they
'were left merely to themselves by your retirement,
'the want of your advice and control would be felt in
'their conduct, and, above all, in their language. It
'is probable that many, from discontent at such a
'measure, would become regardless of your opinions;
'others, affecting to consider themselves as left at
'liberty to form new connections, would join the
'Administration. In short, it is hardly possible that
'the party, under such circumstances, should not lose

'in its numbers, fall into heats and divisions, and that 'precisely that species of opposition should not be 'produced, which in such a crisis you would think 'most detrimental to the interests of the country.' . . . 'These are, in fact, the very evils we apprehend when 'we express so much anxiety for the appointment of a 'leader in the House of Commons. Can such an 'appointment be effectual for any good purpose? Can 'it give the necessary authority to George Ponsonby, 'or to anybody else, if you adopt the measure of 'secession?' . . .

But while thus doing his best to dissuade Lord Grenville from any such intention, he adds as regards himself: 'After what I have said it will appear an 'odd conclusion to state that it will hardly be possible 'for me to give a very close attendance during the 'ensuing Session. If I had remained in the House of 'Commons I certainly would have done so, whatever 'the inconvenience to me might have been; but I do 'not take my family to town, and this, and other 'circumstances, will naturally render me anxious to 'make my stay there as short as possible. This, if 'you take the part I wish you to take, will be of no 'consequence, and if you do not, my dislike of Par-'liamentary business will be so much increased, that 'I am afraid considerations of duty will have but 'little power over me.'

Of the different parties in the House of Commons, the one most difficult to control was one that would

now be called a 'Peace-at-any-price' party,* the proceedings of which, as being chiefly directed by his own near connection and early political friend, Mr. Whitbread, were the source of peculiar annoyance to my father.

It has already been seen, that though cordially agreeing with Mr. Fox in his ardent desire for peace, and earnestly seconding all his efforts to preserve it, he had never gone quite so far as Mr. Fox in advocating pacific principles, and had more than once expressed strong doubts whether the display of an over anxiety for peace was the surest way to obtain it. To this doubt was now added the fear of endangering the good understanding with Lord Grenville and his friends. The question of peace was the one of all others, the discussion of which was most dangerous to the continued union of their parties in opposition; for it could not be raised without reviving to a certain extent the recollection of ancient animosities, when the friends of Mr. Fox and those of Lord Grenville had been directly, and even fiercely, opposed to each other upon it, during the first Administration of Mr. Pitt.

These considerations made my father most anxious to moderate, if possible, the course which the peace party seemed inclined to pursue, and in December 1807, he had written to Mr. Whitbread to express his 'hope that nothing will be hazarded either in language

* This was written in 1855.

'or action, without the most serious consideration of 'the consequences it may produce. Above all, I hope 'that nothing will be done to encourage a clamour 'for peace, against which I must set my face decidedly 'and strenuously.' And he now repeats in January 1808, 'I am, believe me, as desirous of peace as you, 'believing that *real* peace is the only cure for all our 'evils. And it is precisely for this reason that I 'deprecate measures which can have no possible effect 'but that of removing peace to a greater distance.' And again, a few days later, he writes on his way up to London: 'The impediments which these Yorkshire 'meetings must throw in the way of peace seem to 'me pretty obvious. In the first place, they will 'produce counter petitions, which may have the 'effect of encouraging Ministers if, as I really do 'not believe, they are disinclined to peace. In the 'next, they cannot fail to inspire Bonaparte with 'an exaggerated opinion of our distresses, and to in-'flame the pretensions which he is already but too 'well disposed to urge.'

But it was not easy to turn Mr. Whitbread from any course which he had once persuaded himself it was right to adopt; and at a dinner at Lord Grenville's, soon after my father's arrival in London, where the leaders of the Opposition met to consider their course in the ensuing Session, 'he began,' my father writes, 'upon the subject of peace in so hot, and, I 'must say, so wrong-headed a manner, that I am afraid

'the impression must have been very unfavourable to 'him; the disposition being already to consider him 'as a most impracticable man to deal with. Grenville 'seemed quite dumb-foundered, and hardly spoke a 'word, and I very much fear that all the pains I had 'before taken, as I thought with some prospect of 'success, to bring him off his project of secession, will 'now be fruitless.'

Fortunately there was at this time the most perfect agreement on all the great public questions of the day, as well as upon the course which it became the Opposition to pursue, between my father and Lord Grenville; and this alone seems to have prevented the line taken by Mr. Whitbread from producing the consequences my father had apprehended from it. 'Lord 'Grenville,' he writes, on the 27th January, 'is all 'activity and good humour; notwithstanding, I must 'say, some provocation to the contrary, for Whitbread 'shows more and more a disposition which, for his 'own sake, as well as for that of the public, all his 'friends must lament. He gave yesterday notice of 'a motion for peace, without even taking time to see 'the papers on which it is to be founded. Even this, 'however, does not seem to have discomposed Lord 'Grenville, which I can only attribute to our being 'as perfectly agreed as we are, and his being con-'vinced that this kind of proceeding is more unplea-'sant to me even than to him.'

All attempts failed to induce Mr. Whitbread to

abandon this intention, and he drew up his motion in the form of three resolutions,* 'for one of which,' my father writes, 'I certainly could not vote, and to 'another of which I should have considerable ob- 'jection. . . . . He sent them to your uncle' (Mr. George Ponsonby) 'to be communicated to Lord 'Grenville and me, and I expressed my opinion upon 'them.'

For a short time, indeed, it was hoped that an open display of division in the Opposition, which must necessarily occur if these resolutions were forced into discussion, might be avoided. Mr. Whitbread had accepted an address, drawn up by my father, which he proposed to substitute for the resolutions, and which there was reason to hope Lord Grenville and his friends might concur in. 'It was a very handsome proceed- 'ing,' my father says of his own part in drawing up this address, 'because I disapprove of *any* motion at pre- 'sent on this subject; but I could vote for the address 'which I have written, and its practical effect with 'respect to the object which Whitbread has in view, 'would, perhaps, be greater than that of his own 'resolutions.'

The hopes of thus preserving the appearance of union in the party were, however, short lived; for 'though,' my father writes, 'Lord Grenville in the handsomest way possible has concurred in it (the ad- 'dress), expressing, however, the opinion which I

* See Hansard for the Resolutions and the debate upon them.

'entertain, that it would have been much better to 'have had no motion on the subject of peace at pre-'sent,' and though Mr. Whitbread had consented 'to 'further alterations in it, tending to soften the strong 'expressions of a desire for peace, far beyond my ex-'pectations,' yet at a meeting held at Mr. George Ponsonby's, to consider the subject, 'Windham and 'others,' my father proceeds, 'strongly objected to the 'motion even in this shape; and the consequence is, 'that the original resolutions are resumed. We go, 'therefore, to the House of Commons quite divided. 'On the two first Resolutions, though I do not like 'even them, your uncle will support him (Mr. Whit-'bread), but on the third he will declare his opinion 'of the impropriety of moving it now, and support the 'previous question. This is most unfortunate, if not 'fatal, to the party.'

The appearance of division in the party when the debate took place was even greater than he had anticipated. The meeting at Mr. Ponsonby's had been allowed to separate without a clear understanding as to the course to be pursued; and the most general impression seems to have been that the resolutions were to be supported. When, therefore, Mr. Ponsonby, immediately after Mr. Whitbread's opening speech, took the course which had been agreed upon between himself, my father, and Lord Grenville, and moved the previous question, it 'occasioned,' my father writes, 'great surprise and disappointment amongst

'our friends, who were in no degree prepared for it 'by what had passed on the preceding night, and who 'complain loudly that, without any previous commu- 'nication, a course should have been taken so contrary 'to what they had reason to expect. . . . The conse- 'quence was that a great majority of the Opposition 'Members present voted with Whitbread, and very 'few followed your uncle; and I am afraid that the 'result, in every view, must be considered as fatal to 'the future union, and, at all events, to the power 'and consequence of the party. In this fear I ought 'to add that there are some who do not participate, and 'who think the present uneasiness will soon disappear, 'and that we shall pull together again upon other 'questions.'

If his fears were not realized to their full extent (though this difficulty was only a fair sample of similar ones of constant recurrence), it was very much owing to his own exertions to maintain the peace of the party. These, indeed, had from the first been unremitting. Before the commencement of the Session, in speaking of the want of union that prevailed, he had said: 'Though I have the character of a hot, in- 'temperate fellow, I begin to think I am the most 'reasonable person amongst them.' And now, after the division on Mr. Whitbread's motion, he repeats: 'No endeavours that I could use to reconcile differ- 'ences, and to prevent what has happened, have been 'wanting on my part, and perhaps the evil has been

'aggravated in some degree by that attempt.' But though encouraged by somewhat better appearances a day or two later to express a hope that 'there is a 'chance of our getting back to the state in which we 'were before this unfortunate difference took place,' he had had too much experience of those with whom he had to deal, to believe that harmony, even if restored for the moment, could be long preserved. 'You must not 'think,' he writes, 'that this has not left a consider- 'ably increased disgust on my mind with respect to 'politics, or that I do not still entertain very great fears 'for the future union and harmony of the party. The 'principal of these, I confess, arise from the proba- 'bility I think there is, that the encouragement Whit- 'bread has received from his success on this occasion, 'may increase his disposition to do things in future, act- 'ing upon his own separate views and opinions, which 'may again produce differences which, if repeated, must 'be fatal. If my own interests only were concerned, 'this would give me no trouble, for I can most un- 'affectedly assure you that my greatest wish is to have 'nothing more to do with politics or parties. But 'any chance of good—and God knows it is little enough '—that yet remains, consists, in my opinion, in the 'preservation of the union between Fox's friends 'and Lord Grenville's, and in the discretion of the 'latter as leader of the party.'

Matters do not appear to have gone on more satisfactorily during the remainder of the Session of 1808,

and Lord Grenville seems again to have hinted at an intention of partial secession, in answer to which my father thus wrote in December of that year: 'I partici-
'cipate in all your feelings with respect to the pro-
'ceedings in the House of Commons during the last
'Session of Parliament. I must confess not only that
'they have disappointed my hopes, but that person-
'ally, from circumstances which I need not explain,
'they have given me a degree of pain which it is not
'easy for me to express. After this experience,
'therefore, and entertaining the same opinion gene-
'rally which you do of the present state of politics,
'and what is required by it, I certainly can no longer
'press you to a constant and active attendance in
'Parliament. But if I understand you rightly, you
'did not mean to disband the great and powerful
'party which has been formed by a junction of Fox's
'friends and yours. On the contrary, I am persuaded
'you will agree with me in thinking that such an
'event would be so great a misfortune that all reason-
'able endeavours should be used to prevent it.'

In this view my father proceeds to deprecate any declaration, on the part of Lord Grenville, of an intention not to attend; and adverting to the experience which he had himself gained by the total failure of the famous Whig measure of secession, he advises him 'to
'keep himself unrestrained by any declaration, to act
'as circumstances may require, without imposing on
'himself the necessity, if his conduct should alter, of

'answering the taunts to which he would be exposed, by 'distinctions and explanations which are never received 'by an adverse party, and which it is not easy to make 'generally understood.' . . . 'If George Ponsonby, 'Petty, and Tierney,' he proceeds, 'thoroughly under-'stand one another, and act cordially together, the 'mischief of last year may, I hope, be in a great 'degree prevented. We must not expect, however, 'that, upon whatever system we act, some unpleasant-'ness will not occur, or that, in any state of party 'connection, some concessions of opinion, and some 'deviations of conduct, may not occasionally be found 'necessary.'

While endeavouring to soothe the irritation which the proceedings in the House of Commons had tended to excite in Lord Grenville's mind, he was no less anxious to moderate, if possible, the conduct and language of that section of the Opposition, of which he thought Lord Grenville had had such just cause to complain. With this view, before the opening of the Session of 1809, he wrote as follows to Sir Arthur Pigott, who had been Solicitor-General in the late Administration, and who was an active member of the Whig party. And those who believe that the Government of the country, under our parliamentary system, can only be conducted by means of party connection, would do well to lay to heart the counsel which my father thus attempted to impress upon the Whigs of 1809. 'I am very glad to find,' he says, 'that you

'agree with me in thinking that the present state of 'affairs is such as to make it peculiarly incumbent on 'us to avoid giving any fair occasion to the charge of 'carrying on a vexatious and harassing opposition. 'What led me particularly to use that expression, was 'the proofs I have had from many quarters, most of 'them extremely well-disposed to us in general, of the 'very bad effect produced by the character of the de- 'bates in the House of Commons during the last 'Session of Parliament. It is not because opposition 'was merely fruitless, but because what happened last 'year did more to lower all public men, and, with 'them, Parliament itself, in the general estimation, 'than ever was done before, that I stated my utter 'despair of doing any good either now or hereafter, 'unless things were carried on with a very different 'spirit.' . . .

'That in a large party, composed of liberal-minded 'and independent men, there should not occasionally 'occur differences of opinion, cannot be expected. If 'such differences are fundamental, the party necessarily 'separates, with honour to all the persons concerned. 'If they are of a subordinate nature, and such as may 'exist without destroying the general principle on 'which the party is united, they must be modified and 'softened by mutual compromises and concessions.' 'Without such a temper of conciliation I need not 'tell you that no party can long exist either usefully 'or honourably, and it is the want of this conciliatory

'spirit, that, I think, too frequently appeared in the 'last Session, which many of our friends, and I in 'common with them, have greatly lamented.

'If this evil can now be avoided, I shall sincerely 'rejoice; because there is nothing that I have more 'at heart, whatever part I may be able hereafter to 'take in it, than to preserve the connection which was 'formed, so usefully I think for the public, between 'the friends of Fox and Lord Grenville. It has been 'most honourably adhered to by the latter, and I 'think he has some right to expect that degree of for- 'bearance with respect to particular questions, which, 'from various causes, might be embarrassing to him, 'which was necessarily understood as the very ground- 'work of our union with him, and to which every 'person connected with us was at the time bound to 'make up his mind, or to have declared his positive 'objection to the junction, which would have prevented 'his being a party to it. This, again I say, was not 'the character of the proceedings in the House of 'Commons during the last Session, and you must not 'be surprised, therefore, that Lord Grenville, wishing, 'as I know he does most anxiously, to preserve the 'party in all its weight and respectability, and being 'nowise disposed to pass over the extreme misconduct 'of the present Ministers, should wish to take such a 'line as may prevent his being implicated in measures 'of which it is impossible he should approve.' . . .

'As I have often said, a cordial and conciliatory spirit

'in those who are to act together is the first requisite, 'and if both the appearance and the reality of this is 'lost by pertinacity and impatience in individuals to 'force on even questions on which we might agree, at 'their own time, and in their own mode, all hope of 'doing any good must be abandoned.'

I am afraid I may have dwelt too long on the difficulties and party differences with which at this time the leaders of Opposition had to contend. But as similar obstacles have at all times been found to impair the power of a party in opposition—springing, too, from the same cause—namely, the impatience and wrongheadedness of individuals in pressing their particular views without regard to the wishes and opinions of others, this notice of the consequences which followed such a line of conduct in 1808, and which must ever follow a similar one, may not be without its advantage.

The questions that principally engaged the attention of Parliament during the Session of 1808 were those affecting our relations with neutral Powers, as involved in the Orders of Council of November 1807, and the policy which had led, also in 1807, to the attack on Copenhagen and the seizure of the Danish fleet. On both these questions, as well as on all others of public interest, there was at this time a perfect agreement between Lord Grenville and my father: 'It is a great satisfaction to me to find,' my father writes to Lord Grenville on the 3rd of January

1808, 'that of the public measures which must come 'under discussion, none are likely to produce any 'difference of opinion between us. On the question 'of peace—on that of Ireland—and on the conduct of 'Government towards neutrals, we entirely agree. 'Only with respect to the last I must remark, that 'though I condemn as strongly as anybody both the 'policy, and what I conceive to be the illegality, of 'the late Orders in Council, and though I think we 'should have shown ourselves desirous of encouraging 'all fair commerce, just in proportion to Bonaparte's 'wild attempts to destroy it, and, therefore, that we 'should have sought conciliation with all neutral 'Powers, and particularly with America, to the 'utmost limit of reasonable concession; yet in the 'language and the conduct of the latter Government, 'enough has appeared to create a well-founded doubt, 'whether this policy, however carefully pursued, 'would have been successful. Upon this subject, 'therefore, as upon that of peace, we should be care-'ful, in censuring the rash and impolitic measures 'of our Ministers, not to say or do anything which 'may encourage a belief that there exists any dis-'position in a party here, to concede any important 'right, or to abstain from a prompt and severe exer-'tion of the power of the country, if circumstances 'should unfortunately require it.'*

* M. Thiers takes very much the same view of what ought to have been the policy of France towards America. 'En vue d'obtenir

'Upon the Danish business,'* my father continues, 'I had some apprehension that there might be a 'shade of difference between us; but your letter is 'quite satisfactory to me. I do not wish to go farther 'than to state that, as at present informed, there does 'not appear any sufficient ground to justify such an 'attack, and to condemn, as wicked and diabolical, 'the principle of resorting to the practice of the 'enemy with regard to other powers, and fighting 'him, as it is called, with his own weapons.'

It was on a question connected with this subject that my father spoke for the first time in the House of Lords, and he thus describes the impression which it made upon him. 'You will see,' he writes, 'by

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'un tel résultat' (that of obtaining American co-operation in the war against England) 'aucun sacrifice ne devait nous couter, et il était 'évident que pour l'obtenir il fallait d'abord faire cesser toute 'plainte fondée des Américains contre nous, afin que leur irritation 'fût exclusivement tournée contre l'Angleterre. . . . . 'Singulier spectacle,' he adds, 'donné par deux grands Gouvernements; 'l'un, celui de la France, ayant toutes les lumières du génie—l'autre, ce- 'lui de l'Angleterre, toutes les lumières de la liberté—et tous deux 'aveuglés de ses passions, entrant à l'égard de l'Amérique dans une 'vraie concurrence des fautes; car il faut malheureusement le recon- 'naître. Les Pays libres se passionnent et s'aveuglent comme les 'autres; seulement on peut dire, que la liberté est encore de tous les 'remèdes contre l'aveuglement des passions, le plus sûr et le plus 'prompt.'

* The expedition against Copenhagen in the preceding autumn, under the command of Lord Cathcart and Lord Gambier, which ended in the bombardment of the town from the 1st to the 7th of September, and a capitulation, by which the Danish fleet, the object of the expedition, was surrendered to us. The defence of the measure was, that if England did not get hold of this fleet, France would.

'the papers, that I made my début in the House of 'Lords last night.* What I said was, I believe, 'neither good or bad; and it was a subject on which 'I had so great a disinclination to speak, particularly 'for the first time, that I should have remained 'silent but for the extreme unhappiness Holland 'seemed to feel at being left without support. But 'what a place to speak in! With just light enough 'to make darkness visible—it was like speaking in a 'vault, by the glimmering of a sepulchral lamp, to 'the dead! It is impossible I should ever do any-'thing here worth mentioning.' And a few days later, when he was about, for the first time, to make a motion in the House, he says: 'I feel so unaccount-'ably nervous, and have, besides, so many papers to 'read before the debate of to-day, that I can literally 'only thank you for your letter. Why a new theatre 'should occasion all these feelings, particularly one 'for which I have no great respect, I do not know; 'but anything I ever before experienced has been a 'joke to this. My hands are so cold, and I have such 'a nervous trepidation, that I really can hardly write. 'Yet I have plenty of matter in my head, and do not 'see why I should be afraid of getting it out. But 'fear is an unaccountable thing, and I am, at this 'moment, subject to all its influence.'

* On the 27th of January, on the motion for a vote of thanks to the Forces employed at Copenhagen, Lord Holland objected to it; at all events to the navy, who had not been engaged, being included in the vote.

This feeling of nervousness before a debate in which he was to take part, never forsook him. Neither habit, nor the consciousness he must have felt of general success, sufficed to conquer it; and he constantly alludes in his letters, on such occasions, to what he termed his 'oppress.' I believe this feeling on the part of Parliamentary debaters, even of those who have achieved the most unequivocal success, is more general than those who have heard or read their speeches would easily believe. But to return to the affairs of 1808.

The Danish question was the one on which the most vigorous and effective efforts were made by the Opposition, and which led to the most acrimonious debates. It was the practice of Ministers, in defending their policy, to endeavour to divert the attention of Parliament as much as possible from the real merits of the case under discussion, by attacks on the conduct of their predecessors in office; and the effect of this was, from the manner in which it was done, and the tone of the debates which it occasioned, to 'lower' as my father expressed his belief, 'more 'and more the character both of Parliament and of 'the parties engaged in these disputes, in the opinion 'both of the country and of Europe. . . There is 'neither a man nor a party,' he adds, 'in whom any 'degree of confidence is placed; and the want of this 'authority and respect, at such a crisis, is not the least 'of the evils which surround us.'

Mr. Canning seems to have been the greatest offender in this respect. In advocating the policy pursued by the Government towards Denmark, he adopted the line of argument which my father thus so thoroughly deprecated; asserting that those who had sanctioned the expeditions against Constantinople and Alexandria, and who had meditated the seizure of the Portuguese fleet, were the last men who had any right to find fault with the attack on Copenhagen, and the capture of the Danish ships. He also endeavoured to create the impression, by reading partial extracts from my father's despatches, when Secretary of State, to our Minister at the Danish Court, that the late Government had contemplated a similar measure; thus insinuating that it was merely their change of position in Parliament, which caused the Opposition now to object to the policy of the present Ministers.

This mode of meeting an attack by a sort of argumentum ad hominem, and by carrying, as it is called, the war into the enemy's camp, may generally be taken as a symptom of the weakness of the cause which it is sought to defend. There can be no doubt, however, that it has often been found effective, and up to a certain point, perhaps, it is even allowable. But it seems to me that a Minister is greatly wanting in the self-respect and dignity that befits his position, when he rests the defence of his policy on aught but its own merits. The mistakes or short-comings of his predecessors in office can afford no legitimate excuse

for his own, and this sort of 'tu quoque' argument generally recoils upon him who uses it. So did it prove now with Mr. Canning; and it will be seen that he was himself the person chiefly damaged, in the course of the very bitter and acrimonious debates to which the course he pursued gave rise. These debates were not confined to the Lower House. My father, as having been the Foreign Secretary in the late Administration, felt that he was the person whose conduct was principally brought in question; and the discussions which followed the explanations he thus found himself compelled to make in the House of Lords, were not altogether free from the same tone of recrimination which marked the proceedings in the House of Commons.

Of Mr. Canning's speech on the occasion alluded to my father writes on the following day: 'It will, I 'have no doubt, be very much celebrated. It cer- 'tainly was eloquent and powerful, at least the parts 'I heard of it; but for audacious misrepresentation, 'and even for positive falsehood, I never heard it 'equalled.'

Again my father says, a day or two later, 'We are 'to have the Copenhagen Debate on Monday, and I am 'to make some motions for Papers on Thursday, the 'object of which is to enable me to make a statement 'in refutation of the charges brought against the late 'Government. This has been, perhaps, delayed too 'long, but the scandalous misrepresentations, not to

'say falsehoods, resorted to by Canning in the House 'of Commons, make it impossible to put off the justifi- 'cation which we owe to ourselves and the country, 'any longer. It is impossible for any person unac- 'quainted with the facts, to conceive the length of 'audacious falsehood to which he has gone. If I 'had been in the House of Commons I hardly know 'how I could have spoken of it at the time without 'violating the rules of Parliamentary decorum. The 'heat occasioned by all this is becoming very great, 'and will probably produce some violences in the 'House of Commons; but the gravity of the House 'of Lords will prevent similar explosions, though not 'so much so, I hope, as to diminish the effect of a 'strong exposure of the most unlimited system of mis- 'representation and fallacy that was ever practised.'

In fact, the conduct of Mr. Canning in quoting *partial* extracts from despatches not before the House, and the production of which he was at the same time resisting, in order to create an impression unfavourable to the consistency of the late Administration, was felt on all sides to be most indecent. When attacked on the 8th of February in both Houses for such conduct, scarcely any defence was attempted, and Mr. Perceval was compelled to deny that there was any ground for the 'unfavourable impression against 'Lord Howick, which some gentlemen seemed to ap- 'prehend' (from the quotation of those extracts), and to disown in explicit terms that it was 'the intention

of his right honourable friend to produce any such impression.'

The subject continued, however, to be discussed with much warmth in both Houses. On the 11th February my father made his motion for Papers, and the next day he writes: 'We had a most triumphant 'debate last night in the House of Lords. My open- 'ing speech must, I think, have appeared long and 'tiresome,* but our statement remained uncontra- 'dicted, and we even extorted from Hawkesbury an 'acknowledgment of the total want of foundation for 'some of the charges which have been so industriously 'propagated against us.† The remarkable feature of 'the debate was Lord Bathurst's calling Lord Hut- 'chinson to order for stating what was contained in 'confidential despatches. This produced, of course, a 'battle on this point, in the course of which, after 'showing that Lord Hutchinson was perfectly correct, 'we fell without mercy on the indecency and unfair- 'ness of those who, after quoting partial extracts from 'papers against others, denied them the means of 'defence, by endeavouring to stop them when, in con- 'sequence of the attack they had sustained, they were 'giving the explanations which that attack had made 'necessary. The Chancellor acknowledged that the 'practice of reading Papers of this sort, by whomsoever

* It is impossible to form any opinion of it from Hansard, where it is compressed into little more than two pages.

† Particularly for not having made a diversion in favour of Russia, not having advanced a loan to that Power, &c.

'it might have been introduced, was a breach of duty 'to the King and of the orders of the House.* This I 'fixed upon him, and applied the censure to Canning 'and Hawkesbury, who had begun this mode of war-'fare. The whole of this scene was very amusing, 'and produced a temporary animation not usually 'found in the House of Lords. The strong way in 'which Canning's conduct has been condemned thus 'publicly by the Chancellor, and in private conversa-'tion by many of his colleagues, proves that there 'cannot be any cordiality amongst them.'

A report was also current that the King had 'ex-'pressed a strong disapprobation of Canning's con-'duct,' and this, added to the state of the Duke of Portland's health, and the 'evident symptoms,' as my father wrote, 'of internal discontent and division' amongst the Ministers, led to a very general belief in approaching changes in the Government; and 'every 'one,' my father adds, 'was ready to infer that 'Canning either was, or must be out.' . . . 'At other 'times,' he proceeds, 'and with other persons, all 'this would lead me to concur in the opinions which 'are now very much afloat. But my answer now 'always is, that these men cannot separate. They 'have no hope but in remaining together, however

* 'He (the Chancellor) was clearly of opinion that it was disorderly 'in any person who had been employed in a public capacity to read a 'part and disclose the contents of a public despatch without the leave 'of His Majesty.' . . . 'If a breach of order had been committed and 'permitted in another place, that was surely no reason why a similar 'breach of order should be tolerated by their Lordships.'

'much they may hate one another, and however 'frequent their disagreements may be, &c., &c.'

Mr. Canning's conduct in making use of his official position to read partial extracts from despatches which were not before the public, was so generally condemned, and the incessant attacks made upon him in Parliament, were felt to be so damaging to his character, that on the 26th of February he found it necessary to come down to the House, and himself to move for the production of many of the very Papers which he had before refused. This was a great triumph to the Opposition, and they appear to have made the most of it—attacking him both on account of the Papers which he still kept back; and, because, having refused to allow the production of documents which others thought required for the vindication of their character, on the ground that their production would be injurious to the public service, he was no longer influenced by this consideration when his own position seemed to make it expedient to produce them.

'Ministers are going on,' my father writes on the 27th (the day after Mr. Canning had moved for those Papers), 'in a way that I believe would make me 'hang myself, if I was one of them; and, to say the 'truth, they look as miserable as heart could wish. 'Last night I hear that Canning was literally pulled 'to pieces, and that he seemed to feel it to the 'greatest degree.'

On the 4th March Mr. Adam brought the subject

of such quotations from official documents, formally before the House of Commons—moving resolutions which, after reciting what had been done by Mr. Canning, and strongly condemning his conduct, concluded with affirming 'that such conduct is contrary 'to the trust which is reposed in the confidential 'servants of the Crown.' The Minister, however, was not deserted by the majority which the general election had secured to him; and Mr. Canning having made his defence, and then left the House, the motion, after a debate, very shortly reported in Hansard, was rejected by one hundred and sixty-eight votes to sixty-seven.

My father had been necessarily detained in town as long as these discussions lasted. 'You will see,' he writes, 'how much the conduct of the late Govern-'ment is brought into discussion, and how much my 'particular department and the papers written by me 'are concerned. There are many more moved for 'than have been yet produced, and till this contest is 'over, in which not only the character of the late 'Government but my individual character is so much 'involved, it will be impossible for me to stir.'

I need not allude at any length to the other questions which occupied the attention of Parliament during the Session of 1808. My father took little part in their discussion, and early in April left town for the North. Upon the most important of those questions, and that which, next to the Danish busi-

ness, came most frequently under discussion—that, namely, relating to the Orders in Council of the 11th November 1807, and to our general policy as regarded neutral powers, his opinion is fully expressed in the letter written to Lord Grenville before the opening of the Session and already quoted. It has been seen that he doubted the possibility, under any system of policy, of long keeping out of the quarrel which the United States seemed disposed to force upon us; though, at the same time, he strongly condemned the policy, and questioned even the legality of the course, pursued by the Ministers; and denied, what the Government endeavoured to assert, that the principle of the Orders in Council issued in January 1807, by the Cabinet of which he had been himself a member, and of those of the 11th November, issued by the present Government, was in any degree the same. He anticipated but too correctly what must be the result of the present state of things, and in one of his first letters from London had said that he 'looked 'upon an American war as inevitable.'

I must, however, shortly notice another question which was brought forward before my father left town, and in the discussion of which he took part; not as being in itself of general interest, but as having afforded him the occasion of once more recording those opinions in favour of progressive Reform, which he had so often and so fruitlessly advocated ever since he had held a seat in Parliament; and of

again combating that alleged dread of innovation, which was so long successfully pleaded by those who resisted all improvement; also, as presenting a rather curious illustration of Parliamentary tactics; of the state of parties in the House of Lords, and of the forms of that House.

Towards the close of the Whig Administration, an address had been carried, deprecating the practice of granting offices in reversion. The subject had been referred to a Select Committee, on whose recommendation a Bill had been subsequently introduced, to which the present Ministers had given an unwilling consent, for the purpose of preventing such a practice in future. This Bill had passed the House of Commons during the preceding Session, but was thrown out in the House of Lords. It had been revived in the present Session, and, having again passed the House of Commons, now stood for consideration in committee in the House of Lords. It was violently opposed by Lords Arden and Redesdale, as not only interfering with the Royal Prerogative, and encroaching on the privileges of that House, but as a measure dangerous in its principle, from the consequences to which it would lead, and which should, therefore, be resisted in the very beginning. In answer to these objections, my father, having first shown that it was no infringement of the Royal Prerogative; and that, on the contrary, it was as a friend to the 'Constitutional Prerogative 'of the executive authority' that he 'called upon

'the House to put an end to a system above all 'others calculated to strip the Crown of those rights 'which are so necessary to its honour and security,' proceeded thus:—

'But says the noble and learned lord (Redesdale), 'I cannot reconcile myself to support the principle of 'this measure, because in its operation, or in being 'made the precedent for succeeding innovations, it 'might possibly, or probably, be attended with most 'mischievous and dangerous consequences. Really, 'my Lords, it is impossible to answer this argument 'but by others which have heretofore on many occa-'sions been introduced into discussion. If, indeed, 'such an objection was to succeed—if the spirit of 'improvement was to evaporate from the influence of 'possible dangers, and probable apprehensions—if 'errors were not to be corrected, or evils remedied, from 'an overweening dread of innovation,—then this coun-'try would have to lament the want of all those great 'and glorious privileges and securities which constitute 'so deservedly our national boast and our most essen-'tial safeguard. For what was Magna Charta but an 'innovation? What else was the Petition of Right? 'What else the Revolution, that glorious epoch when 'this country obtained a recognition of its liberties? 'Indeed, I would ask the venerable bench of Bishops, 'whom, on this occasion particularly, I see in such 'formidable numbers arrayed against me, whether if

'this dislike to innovation, this hostility to improve-
'ment, had existed some centuries past, this country
'would have participated in the enlightened wisdom
'and numerous benefits of the Reformation; or whether
'they themselves would have ever had a seat within
'these walls, with power to decide on this measure of
'Reform, which they are now perhaps prepared to
'oppose.' Having then traced the calamities of the French Revolution, and the melancholy fate of Louis XVI., 'to the obstinacy with which every
'improvement was opposed, and to the unbending
'disinclination to conform to the spirit of the times
'and the progress of mental advancement,' he asked,
'Where can we find a more signal and melancholy
'exemplification of the danger of not yielding to those
'plans of salutary and wholesome correction, which
'the defects of all human institutions render absolutely
'necessary?' And he called upon 'those who are so
'particularly attached to the Court, and upon the
'illustrious and Royal personages opposite' (the Dukes of York, Cumberland, and Cambridge), 'who
'are so active in their opposition to the measure,' to consider the state of foreign sovereigns, reduced 'to
'the lowest vassalage to the great and inordinate
'power of France! Be assured,' he continued, 'that,
'much as the unrivalled conqueror of the European
'Continent owes to his own extensive talents for
'success,—much as he is indebted to the undisputed

'sagacity of his plans for his gigantic elevation,—he 'has had great and powerful auxiliaries in the selfish- 'ness, the sordid views, the illiberal jealousies of the 'dynasties he has subverted; in the apathy and torpor 'of the oppressed and despised populations over whom 'he has triumphed.'

The following is my father's own account of the above discussion, and of the proceedings which led to the final rejection of the proposed measure.

'We had last night a most curious scene in the 'House of Lords. The Princes, four in number, came 'down in force with all the household troops and 'bishops, and endeavoured to throw out the Reversion 'Bill on the question for going into Committee. They 'beat us in the numbers present, but the majority of 'proxies being on our side, we were equal upon the 'whole, and, according to the established usage in the 'House of Lords, the question was therefore decided 'in the negative, so that the motion made by the 'enemies of the Bill for discharging the order for the 'Committee was lost. In the Committee Hawkesbury 'moved an amendment to limit the duration of the 'Bill to two years.' 'Ministers,' my father explained in another letter, 'being against the measure in their 'hearts, had,' to avoid the unpopularity of a direct opposition to it, 'hit upon this expedient, declaring 'that without this limitation they must be against the 'measure.' They therefore 'moved this amendment,

'to which Lord Holland and I objected as making the 'Bill worse, but declared that we did not mean to 'press our objection (feeling that the Bill would be 'lost if the amendment were negatived); though, if 'we were compelled to vote, we must do so in sup- 'port of the Bill as it stood. We did not intend, 'therefore, to divide; but the courtiers, who held the 'Ministers pledged to oppose the Bill if the amend- 'ment was lost, divided the House, and voted with 'us against it, and the Ministers were left in a 'minority of only twenty-one. The Bill, therefore, 'passed the Committee without any alteration, and 'on the third reading was opposed both by the 'Court and the Administration, and thrown out ac- 'cordingly.'

The small minority in which the Government was left when deserted by the 'King's friends,' showed the real strength of the party now in power without the Court, while the result of the division on the third reading of the Bill, when the Court and Ministers were again united, afforded the best practical answer to the assertion of Lord Redesdale, that the influence of the Crown was decreasing. 'The increasing influence of 'the Crown was a topic,' Lord Redesdale said, 'which 'in all times it had been fashionable to dwell upon. 'Since Mr. Burke's famous Bill, he would, however, 'contend that the influence of the Crown had been 'diminished rather than increased.'

My father had been most anxious to attend the expected debate on the Roman Catholic petition, but the state of my mother's health, and the death of his uncle, Sir Harry Grey, at the beginning of April, made his continued attendance in Parliament impossible for the remainder of the Session. He concurred entirely with Lord Grenville and other friends to the Roman Catholic cause, in thinking the presentation of the petition at that time ill-advised. But the Catholics being determined to take that step, and having himself a strong conviction not only of the justice of their claims, but of the expediency, not to say the necessity, of granting them, he was desirous of giving them his best support.

But he disapproved most strongly of the course which the Catholic party subsequently adopted. In the debates consequent upon the presentation of the petition, Lord Grenville in the House of Lords, and Mr. George Ponsonby in the House of Commons, had announced the consent of the Roman Catholics to giving the King a veto on the appointment of their Bishops, and much stress had been laid on the importance of this concession on their part. Lord Grenville adduced it as an 'unquestionable proof of their 'solicitude to meet the kindness of their fellow-sub-'jects, and to accede to any practicable means of 'removing even the most groundless jealousies;' adding, that 'this provision formed a part of the plans

'intended to be brought forward at the period of the 'Union'; and what we then knew,' he said, 'of the 'sentiments of the Catholics respecting it, left no 'doubt upon our minds that the matter might be 'easily and satisfactorily adjusted.'

It was therefore with extreme surprise, and still more indignation, that my father heard from Mr. Ponsonby in October following, that the Roman Catholic Bishops had repudiated this condition.

'I will not dwell,' he writes in answer, 'on Dr. 'Milner's conduct further than to say, that it proves 'him to be a man not to be trusted. The authority 'he gave you is a full justification of what you said in 'the House of Commons, and in my opinion it will, 'at some time or other, be necessary for you to 'produce it.

'It is now incumbent on us,' he proceeds, 'to con- 'sider what should be done to retrieve this unfortunate 'step of the Catholic Bishops, and to preserve our 'own consistency and honour. You must know enough 'of the public opinion in this country to be convinced, 'that unless the negative on the appointment of the 'Bishops is given, particularly after such an expecta- 'tion has been held out, and so much stress laid upon 'it, all hope of carrying the question in favour of the 'Catholics must be abandoned.'

Attempts should therefore, he thought, be made to get the Catholic Bishops to rescind their resolution, or,

if they would not do so, to separate the moderate Roman Catholics from them. 'Our conduct,' he proceeds, 'as a party who have hitherto supported the 'Catholic claims, must necessarily be regulated in a 'great degree by the same views as the moderate 'Catholics themselves, . . . at the same time that we 'must be actuated by a due regard to our own character and influence in the country. These, in my 'opinion, imperiously require that we should manifest 'a determined resistance to this ill-advised measure of 'the Bishops. I hope it is unnecessary to make any 'professions as to the abstract principle of not excluding men from civil rights on account of religious 'opinions. No man more readily assents to, or more 'cordially cherishes that principle than I do. But 'there are few circumstances in human life, I believe 'I may say none in politics, that can be reduced to 'mere abstractions. Expediency must operate in all, 'and he who pretends otherwise is either a hypocrite, 'or unfit for the affairs of this world.

'If therefore the negative on the appointment of the 'Bishops be a thing reasonable in itself; if it be a 'security which, considering the particular character of 'the Papal Power (nothing like which prevails in any 'other sect) may properly be required, either to allay 'fears or to obviate prejudices; if it is a point which 'cannot be stated to affect injuriously the rights of the 'Catholic Church, and to which we have something 'equal almost to positive proof that the Catholics feel

'no conscientious objection; above all, if we are 'morally certain that without it the question cannot 'be carried, and have pledged ourselves by recent 'declarations to an opinion of its expediency and 'importance; it seems to me that the interests of the 'Catholics, no less than our own consistency and 'honour, require that we should make an early decla- 'ration, that this concession is indispensable to our 'future support of the cause.'

At the same time my father wrote both to the Duke of Bedford and Lord Grenville to suggest the propriety of such a declaration being at once made, which 'coming,' he said, 'from those who have hitherto 'so zealously maintained the claims of the Catholics, 'and who have given such unequivocal proofs of their 'sincerity, by the sacrifices they have made for them, 'could not fail, I should hope, in giving to the 'moderate Catholics a decisive weight in an appeal, if 'ultimately an appeal should be necessary, to the 'general body of that religion.' And to Mr. Whitbread he says, in sending him a copy of his own correspondence on the subject with Mr. Ponsonby, 'I am convinced that if it' (the resolution of the Catholic Bishops) 'is persevered in, it will be impossible 'to carry the question either in this or the succeeding 'reign, even if there should be a King and Govern- 'ment friendly to it; and the only chance, as it appears 'to me, either of preserving our own credit in the 'country, or of destroying the influence of a malignant

'party amongst the Catholics, and bringing them to 'a policy absolutely necessary for the accomplishment 'of their object, is to be found in the immediate adop- 'tion of the measure I have suggested to George 'Ponsonby, viz.: that it should be signified to Lord 'Fingall and those amongst the leaders of the Catholics 'with whom we have been in the habit of communi- 'cating, that we cannot again bring forward or sup- 'port their question till this resolution is explained or 'rescinded.'

The Duke of Bedford and Lord Grenville, as well as Mr. Whitbread, disagreed with my father as to the propriety of such a declaration; and as its effect depended entirely, he thought, on the unanimity with which it was adopted, he had no alternative but to let it drop. Not that his own opinion was in any way changed: 'But when I found,' he writes to Lord Grenville, 'that you did not approve of my proposal, 'and that the Duke of Bedford and Whitbread, as 'well as Lord Holland, were decidedly averse to it, 'as there could no longer be any question of a 'measure, the whole effect of which depended on our 'agreement, I deferred it' (that is, writing to him again on the subject) 'till we could have an oppor- 'tunity of more full discussion.' . . . 'I will now only 'state,' he adds, 'that everything I hear confirms me 'in the opinion that such a measure as I proposed 'afforded us the only chance of again putting that im-

'portant question on a footing which might enable us 'all to agree, or which could reconcile either the 'King or the people of this country to it.' And he further adds, with how much truth the subsequent history of Ireland, with its long years of selfish and demoralizing agitation too miserably proves, 'But I 'am convinced that the resolution of the Bishops was 'forced upon them by the activity of a party of the 'most malignant description, who are still most assi- 'duously, and, for want of resistance, I fear too suc- 'cessfully, employed in kindling and inflaming a 'general spirit like their own.'

Mr. Whitbread not only disagreed as to the propriety of such a declaration as my father had thus suggested, but he also, unfortunately, with some of the more violent members of Opposition, took very much the same line as that of the extreme party in Ireland above referred to; and having hinted that Mr. Ponsonby was not justified in affirming so positively the assent of the Catholic party to the veto, my father replied: 'I cannot think that George 'Ponsonby outstepped his authority in what he said 'in the House of Commons. You will observe that 'he not only had the direct authority of Dr. Milner 'speaking his own opinion, and *what he had every* '*reason to believe* to be the opinion of the Bishops, but 'that of Lord Fingall also; and both confirmed by the 'knowledge that the negative had been formally

'offered, at the time of the Union, by the Bishops 'themselves.'*

'It is true that till the last Session the question 'had been brought forward without making this veto 'a preliminary consideration; but I do not imagine 'that anybody ever thought the claims of the Catho- 'lics were to be simply conceded, without any securi- 'ties against the dangers which might be apprehended 'from such a concession. Such, I am sure, was not 'Fox's opinion; and I well remember his answer 'when Pitt taunted him with his magnificent and 'sweeping way of doing things, without any regard to 'the provisions which might be necessary for the 'safety of the Protestant Establishment; his answer 'was: "that Pitt had no right to represent him as 'being less friendly to the Establishment, or less 'anxious for its safety than he was; and that, un- 'undoubtedly, all proper securities ought to be 'taken." He mentioned to me this very measure 'of the negative as one of them.'

* Mr. Ponsonby being questioned in the House of Commons as to the authority on which he affirmed the readiness of the Irish clergy to consent to a veto on the appointment of their Bishops, replied: 'that 'he made his statement on the authority of Dr. Milner, who was a 'Catholic Bishop in this country, and who was authorised by Catholic 'Bishops of Ireland to make the proposition, in case the measure of 'Emancipation should be acceded to, that the person to be nominated 'to any vacant bishopric should be submitted for the King's approba- 'tion; and that if the approbation was refused, another person should 'be proposed, and so on in succession until His Majesty's approbation 'should be obtained, so that the appointment should finally rest with 'the King.'

It will be seen that two years later Lord Grenville found himself compelled to write to Lord Fingall, as the representative of the Irish Catholics, very much in the sense of the declaration which my father now advised. But it had not then the effect he believed it certainly would have had, if it had been adopted at the time that the conduct of the Irish Bishops afforded so complete a justification for it.

Without anticipating what occurred with regard to this question in after years, I must here give some extracts from one of my father's letters to Mr. Whitbread, written in January 1810, as explaining the principle on which he then and at all times acted with respect to it.

'With respect to the Catholic Question,' he writes, 'I must continue to be of the opinion that nothing can 'be more prejudicial to the hope of carrying it in time 'to prevent the most fatal consequences, or more 'embarrassing to those who have supported it on the 'grounds on which Lord Grenville and I have sup-'ported it, than a renewal of the motion at the present 'moment and under the present circumstances. . . . 'With these opinions' (as to the consequences which would follow its introduction) 'I must deprecate the 'discussion; though, if it takes place, I shall not fail 'to give, not a cold and reluctant, but the most 'zealous support I can give, to the principles I 'believe to be sound; upon the ground and with the 'explanations by which, as it appears to me, those

'principles ought practically to be regulated. These 'opinions are, after much reflection, so deeply fixed 'in my mind, that I must act upon them, and I must 'beg leave to lay all considerations of popularity 'out of the question. If popularity follows me in 'doing what I believe to be right, I shall always 'be glad of it; but I never have, and never will, 'sacrifice one item of what I believe to be right 'to obtain it, any more than I would for Court 'favour. The desire of the one may at one moment 'be imputed to me, and at the next the pursuit 'of the other; and I must trust that eventually 'my conduct will satisfy the public that neither 'imputation has been just. Now, I have very little 'doubt it will be said, as you apprehend, that the 'last is my object; but, probably, a very short time 'will prove most unanswerably that it could not be 'so, when, in opposition I believe to the opinion of 'almost all my friends, I shall make the immediate 'settlement of this question, the sine quâ non of my 'acceptance of office.'

What can be added to this clear and noble exposition of his principles of action on this subject, to prove the high-minded singleness of purpose, which, disdaining all personal considerations, made the success of the cause his one and only aim, and to show how little he was disposed to make the question a weapon of Parliamentary warfare, or a stepping-stone to power! Yet there were not wanting men, and in the

position of Cabinet Ministers, (and who, though professing themselves friendly to the claims of the Catholics, owed their situations as such to the 'No Popery' cry which had been raised against their predecessors,) who were not ashamed to resort to such arguments, and judging of the motives of others by their own standard, to accuse their opponents of having been influenced in the course they had pursued on this question, in and out of office, by a mean love of place!

But a new subject was now rising to agitate and divide men's minds.

The French invasion of Portugal, which had at first taken place in concert with Spain, had resulted in the latter country also being overrun and occupied by French armies, and in the dispossession of her King and Royal Family under circumstances of peculiar and revolting perfidy; nor was there any one who viewed the events now occurring in the Peninsula with more heartfelt indignation than did my father.

In subsequent years, indeed, when experience had shown how little dependence could be placed upon the Spaniards themselves;—when, owing entirely to an undue reliance upon Spanish promises of support and co-operation, Sir John Moore's army had been forced to re-embark after a disastrous retreat, closed indeed by a victory that reflects undying glory on the British arms;—when the army of Sir Arthur Wellesley was only saved from still greater dangers after the battle of Talavera, arising too from the same causes, by the

energy and decision of its chief;—when on one side my father considered the enormous aggregate of the French force arrayed against us, (still amounting in 1812 to upwards of 300,000 men,) and wanting nothing but unity of command to make it a matter of impossibility that the comparative handful of British troops which we alone maintained in the Peninsula, could long stand before them;—and when he saw, on the other hand, the reckless and fruitless manner, as it appeared to him, in which our resources were squandered, and the miserable and inadequate attempts of an incapable Ministry to support our army;—when he considered all these things, my father certainly did, in after years, feel strong doubts both of the prudence and possibility of maintaining the contest in Spain. He did not then foresee—who indeed did?—that Napoleon would, of himself, by his insane invasion of Russia, wantonly destroy those means, a comparatively small portion of which would have speedily sufficed to establish his dominion in Spain; nor did my father then (the fact may be stated, which he was himself afterwards the first to admit,) do full justice to the consummate skill and judgment, the energy and unwearied patience, of the great commander who was at the head of our forces; who, while providing every means for the possibly and even probably necessary re-embarkation of his troops, and taking every precaution for their security against a catastrophe, saw with an unfailing sagacity, that he had only to bide his

time, and that if he could but maintain a footing upon the soil of the Peninsula, the time must surely and inevitably arrive when the restless and insatiate ambition of our great enemy, leading him ever to fresh enterprises against the liberties of the world, would give the British army the opportunity of contributing effectively to his final overthrow.

At the commencement of the struggle, however, my father's whole sympathies went with the Spaniards. 'What a scene of perfidy and atrocious cruelty,' he writes to Mr. Whitbread in June 1808, 'this has been 'in Spain! Surely this villain will push things too 'far at last, and I am sometimes inclined to hope more 'from the despair of a people, than could at any time 'have been effected by any combination of power. 'If it should once begin to be attended with success 'anywhere, there is no saying to what it might lead. 'Spain, if the energies of that country were once 'brought into action, affords perhaps greater means 'for permanent resistance than any country in Europe 'except this. I wish Lord St. Vincent had been off 'Cadiz at this moment.'

'One hardly dare hope,' he writes again, a few days later, 'that the poor Spaniards can be successful. Yet 'their country affords means of resistance, and presents 'difficulties to the attacker which he has not yet met 'with. Much depends on the man at their head, and 'on the conduct of our Government. This is indeed 'a case in which no sacrifice would be too great.

'Men, money, ships, to the utmost extent that the 'country will afford them, ought to be sent without 'delay. It is provoking that at such a moment so 'great a proportion of all should be wanted in Sweden, 'where, by this time I take it, Ministers have found 'that it was easier to blame us for not supporting that 'mad King, than to do so themselves. The advantage 'to us, and the security to Sweden, from the attack on 'Copenhagen, are now pretty strongly exemplified.'

Mr. Sheridan brought the state of Spain before the House of Commons on the 15th of June, but the manner in which the motion was made by him, and met by the Ministers, was equally condemned by my father. 'I never read anything,' he wrote to Mr. Whitbread, 'better contrived to do mischief in all 'ways, as tending,' he thought, 'still more to damage 'the character of public men, of parties, and of Parlia-'ment;' while 'as to its professed object of indicating 'a general feeling here which might prove useful in 'Spain, nothing could more completely fail. In this 'view, however,' he adds, 'I am inclined to think some 'good perhaps might have been done, if the subject 'had been introduced by a person who had not looked 'exclusively to the gratification of his own vanity, and 'if we had not Ministers who never see anything to be 'gained in a debate, but an opportunity of throwing 'some slur on their predecessors in office, or their op-'ponents in Parliament.'

But strongly opposed as he was to the general tone

and policy of the Government, his at least was no factious opposition; and he was ever ready to express his approval when the conduct of Ministers seemed to him to deserve it. Thus he writes to Mr. Whitbread, in July 1808: 'Nothing can, in my opinion, be more proper than the manner in which this subject is treated in the King's 'speech' (at the close of the Session), 'and if the Ministers pursue the line which their language indicates, 'they will have my hearty approbation.' And in writing to Lord Grenville, a few months later (Dec. 29th, 1808), he says, in allusion to the assistance given to Spain by this country, and to the Ministerial declaration that accompanied it (on both of which points Lord Grenville seems to have expressed an adverse opinion): 'I certainly am one of those who approved 'of giving assistance upon the largest scale to Spain, 'and who still think if a powerful army had been sent 'there in sufficient time, and upon a reasonable plan, 'it might have contributed to the ultimate defeat of 'Bonaparte's attack upon that country. I think, too, 'that it was right first to secure Portugal, though not 'to lock up an army there after the expulsion of the 'French.' With respect to the 'Declaration,' he proceeds: 'Do not think I mean to defend Canning's 'foolish flourishes, or that upon reconsidering the 'matter I am prepared to contend that it might not 'have been better to avoid the pledge which has been 'given. But of all the infamies ever incurred by a 'nation, I think the greatest would have been, in the

'then situation of affairs (not quite so desperate, I 'yet hope, as you deem it) to have appeared to aban- 'don the Spaniards, or to have treated under the idea 'of acknowledging Joseph Bonaparte as King of Spain. 'I must think that we were bound by every tie that 'can bind a nation, both in interest and honour, to 'support the Spaniards as long as they have the means 'of resistance, and do not themselves abandon their 'own cause.'*

His feeling on this point was so strong that he says to Mr. Whitbread: 'This is the only thing that I 'believe could make me feel a moment's wish to be in 'office.'

The sanguine hopes, however, which he expressed in July 1808, 'That the Spaniards would succeed in 'their glorious enterprise,' and that 'Bonaparte would 'find reason to repent of this most atrocious of all his 'villanies,' were soon damped, owing chiefly, as it appeared to him, to the misconduct of our Ministers. And on the 21st of April 1809, having first pointed out, in a powerful speech, how the 'hopes of the nation 'had been raised and all their most generous sympa- 'thies excited, as he trusted they would never fail to

* Overtures had been made by both Russia and France, from Erfurth, to treat with England on the basis of the 'Uti possidetis,' but as the French insisted that this condition should embrace the recognition of Joseph Bonaparte as King of Spain, the overture went no further than a single exchange of notes. On the 15th of December, 1808, the English Government issued a declaration (referred to in the above letter) explaining the grounds on which they had refused to entertain the proposition.

'be, when the contest is between justice, freedom, and 'public independence, on the one side, and the highest 'degree of atrocity and oppression on the other;' and having also shown how, under the universal sympathy with the cause of the Spanish people, 'the voice of 'opposition had ceased, and a liberal indulgence was 'given to Ministers of all they pleased to demand,' he moved an address to the Crown, to declare the opinion of the House, that it was owing to the want of information and foresight on the part of Ministers; to their supineness, rashness, and mismanagement, as contrasted with the activity, foresight, and prudence of the enemy; to the inadequacy of the supplies sent to the army; and to the want of 'any rational plan of 'operations, either for the direction of our own exer- 'tions, or for combining them with those of the Spanish 'and Portuguese nations; that the hopes which the 'nation had been led to entertain have been disap- 'pointed; a large and useless expenditure of the 'means of the country has been incurred; a great and 'dangerous accession of political, naval, and military 'strength has already been attained by the enemy; 'and above 7000 of His Majesty's brave troops, toge- 'ther with their gallant commander have been sacri- 'ficed without advantage, in an enterprise without 'plan, combination, or foresight, and equally ill-timed 'and misdirected.'

This motion was powerfully supported by Lord Grenville; and the large minority, as it would even

now be considered, of ninety-two peers voted in its favour.

The state of parties in Opposition, of which my father had seen so much reason to complain during the Session of 1808, and which has been alluded to at some length at the beginning of this Chapter, was even worse in 1809, and to the old causes of dissension was now added a new one. A Colonel Wardle had brought forward charges against the Duke of York relative to his administration of the army, and was supported in them, to the unspeakable disgust of my father, by a large number of the more violent members of the Opposition. It will suffice on this subject to record the opinion which, in a letter written on his way to London in May 1809, he thus expresses of Colonel Wardle and his supporters: 'From the ac-'counts of the debates that I have seen in the papers 'on the road, the enragés' (so he termed the extreme party by which these proceedings were instigated) 'seem to be going on more absurdly and extrava-'gantly than ever. . . . The effect of their latter pro-'ceedings, however, I am inclined to think will be 'good, as they must disgust all persons of sense and 'honourable feelings; and indeed it seems as if 'the Ministers, and House of Commons in general, 'were beginning to take a little heart against them. 'I was very glad to see that one Member spoke of 'Wardle as I think he deserves, and said he would as 'soon vote thanks to Mrs. Clarke for her virtue as to

'him for his patriotism. I really think they stand on 'pretty much the same ground; nor can I conceive 'anything baser than the conduct which is now held 'up as entitled to the gratitude and admiration of the 'whole country. An informer, however useful his in-'formation may prove, is generally shunned as an 'infamous character; and I do not see that Mr. 'Wardle, who, by his own acknowledgment, formed 'an intimacy with a vile prostitute to get into her 'secrets, and to induce her to betray the man whose 'confidence she had before abused, and who stole her 'letters for the purpose of supporting his charges, de-'serves to be viewed in a much better light.'

'The violent party in the House of Commons,' he repeats, on his arrival in London, 'are going on worse 'than ever.' And after condemning their proceedings as such as would never have been countenanced 'in 'other times or by men of liberal spirit,' he proceeds; 'but now a new code of political morality and honour 'has been adopted, and everything seems greedily 'taken up that can tend to throw discredit on the 'general system of the Government. Lord Grenville 'seems very uneasy upon this point, as well as upon 'the general course of public opinion, and it is impos-'sible not to admit the reasonableness of his feelings. 'It is very difficult, however, to find a remedy for 'evils which have been brought on by the manner in 'which the present Ministers came into office, and by 'the conduct which they have been pursuing ever

'since; the more especially as they seem to have no 'plan or foresight, living from day to day, and trusting to what accident may produce in the course of 'each debate as it arises. They are more divided than 'ever amongst themselves, and a very general sentiment prevails that they cannot stand.'

But as this state of things led to changes in the Government and to negotiations for other changes which will require particular mention, I must reserve all further notice of it for another chapter.

CHAPTER V.

FROM THE OVERTURE BY MR. PERCEVAL TO THE WHIGS, IN SEPTEMBER 1809, TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE REGENCY, IN FEBRUARY 1811.

REPORTS of divisions and dissensions amongst the members of the Government had been more or less prevalent almost from its first formation in 1807; but they had become much more general towards the beginning of 1809, and my father on arriving in London in May of that year, after writing, (May 10th, 1809,) as already quoted, that 'the Ministers are more divided 'than ever amongst themselves, and a very general 'sentiment prevails that they cannot stand,' proceeds thus:—'This language, indeed, is openly talked by 'some of the most considerable of their adherents, and 'even by some amongst themselves; and if I could 'persuade myself that anything would induce Canning 'to go out, I should believe from facts that have come 'to my knowledge since my arrival, that his determi-'nation is taken, and will be publicly announced even 'in the course of this week.

'If this should take place, the Administration must 'break up; but then I really do not know who are to

'take their places. I have no idea that the King 'will submit to the conditions which we should think 'indispensable for our assuming office; and, to tell 'you the truth, this is one of my greatest comforts, 'for I never looked at anything with more real horror 'than the prospect of being called upon to take a 'share in the Administration, in the present situation 'of the country. The reports of my being sent for 'are more prevalent than ever, and I have no doubt 'there are very few who do not believe that I am 'come to town with that expectation. They little 'know how reluctantly I came, and how anxiously I 'am looking to the moment when I may be allowed 'to return to Howick.'

But the violent section in the House of Commons, whose proceedings, as has been shown in the preceding chapter, my father had always so strongly deprecated, had continued, notwithstanding all his endeavours to moderate their course, to act in a manner which he could only consider as, in fact, breaking up the Opposition. 'I look upon the party,' he writes on the 20th May, 'as quite disbanded in the House 'of Commons. Thus Ministers have obtained a new 'lease by the wise conduct of those who wish to exhibit 'themselves to the country as the purest of patriots, 'and the most effective of its benefactors. Their 'exertions, however, seem to have slackened, and if, 'as I think probable, they find the public growing 'sick of their nonsense, they will have time to reflect

'on what they have done.' And again: 'The Ministers are set up; and to them (this violent section) 'the country will owe the benefits, whatever they may 'be, of their continuing in office. Not that they do 'not yet talk of a desire to strengthen themselves, and 'this is very generally expressed with regard to me. 'The report of my coming in is still prevailing all 'over the town. I do not think this will lead even to 'a proposition; but, if it does, it will be on a ground 'to which the answer will be short and easy. If they 'had declared, as ten days ago I feared they would, 'their inability to carry on the Government, it would 'have been more embarrassing. But a proposal to 'come in as an auxiliary to these men can admit of no 'hesitation. The truth is, if I would treat on these 'terms, I have no doubt I might have the Duke of 'Portland's office before the end of the week, and all 'I shall get, probably, by holding off, will be still to 'be represented as a person desirous only of place. 'It must be confessed that there is not, in the gratitude 'of the public, much encouragement to political virtue.'

The dissensions in the Cabinet were soon made public by the celebrated quarrel, ending in a duel, between Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning, and their consequent resignation of office; and the Duke of Portland finding it necessary, on account of the state of his health,* to retire about the same time, an applica-

* He had a severe paralytic stroke in August, and died in October, 1809.

tion to the leaders of the Opposition could no longer be avoided. On the 23rd of September Mr. Perceval wrote to my father and Lord Grenville to ask them to come to town to confer with himself and Lord Liverpool, 'for the purpose of forming an extended 'and combined Administration.' * But the proposition being, as my father had anticipated it would be, to come in as auxiliaries to the existing Administration, he answered, without a moment's hesitation, and by return of post, as he had already announced his intention of doing: 'that such an union was, with respect to him, 'under the present circumstances, impossible,' and that this being the answer he found himself under the necessity of giving, there could be no advantage in his complying with Mr. Perceval's request that he would come to London, where his appearance 'at such a 'moment might be attended with some inconvenience.'

Lord Grenville's answer was to the same effect as regarded the proposed junction, but there was this difference between his mode of meeting the proposition and that of my father, that he thought it right to go up to London as requested by Mr. Perceval. My father's only doubt as to his own course was, lest his refusal to do the same should be misconstrued; and he afterwards wrote to Mr. Whitbread, that 'though 'quite satisfied upon reflection that the line he took 'was, in all views, the best; if he could have been

* Mr. Perceval's letter to my father, and the answer of the latter, will be found at length in Appendix I., p. 429.

'quite sure that Lord Grenville would have decided 'to go to town; he certainly would have met him 'there.' In sending Mr. Whitbread a copy of his answer to Mr. Perceval, he again says: 'I am satisfied 'in my own mind as to the propriety of what I have 'done on the main point, though I was unfortunately 'without any person here to consult upon it. As to 'the manner, I hope there was nothing very wrong, 'though I am by no means so confident that I ought 'not to have gone to town. I thought it better, how-'ever, not to do so, in order to give the most decisive 'proof of the settled resolution, from which my refusal 'to enter into any treaty with the present Ministers 'has proceeded, and to obviate, as far as I could, the 'speculations which would necessarily arise on my 'appearance in London at the present moment. I 'can hardly expect that I shall not meet with blame 'from many quarters,—from many of my friends, for 'having lost what they may think a fair opportunity 'of bringing back the Government to a better system, '—from the adherents of the Court, for what will 'perhaps be condemned as a haughty and uncomply-'ing disposition,—and from the patriots of the Crown 'and Anchor, as having been influenced by a sordid 'desire of office, to which sufficient allurements were 'not held out. All this I must bear; but I shall 'hope that from yourself, and those who know me, 'my conduct will meet with a more candid interpre-'tation.'

Mr. Whitbread quite approved of the course my father had adopted, 'I rejoice,' he says in answer, 'in the decision you have made, and in the manner of 'doing it. . . . I could have no doubt as to what 'you would do, and in a letter to Tierney I antici- 'pated that you would not come to town, unless the 'message to you was directly from the King, com- 'manding your attendance.'

Mr. Horner also writes on the 30th September: 'The *Courier* (newspaper) I understand states that 'Lord Grenville is arrived in town, but that Lord 'Grey has declined to come. If the summons was 'from the King, how could Lord Grey refuse? And 'if it was an invitation from Perceval, how could 'Lord Grenville accept?

While at the same time Sir Samuel Romilly says of this proposal: 'It was probably not intended as an 'insult to Lord Grenville and Lord Grey. But surely 'no greater insult could be offered to any public men, 'than to suppose them to be so eager to be in power, 'that they would unite in an Administration with per- 'sons whom they have constantly represented as 'having supplanted them by a dark and disgraceful 'intrigue. . . . and as having entered on their office 'upon the most unconstitutional principles.'

If the extracts given in a former chapter from Lord Grey's letters to Mr. Fox during the Administrations of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Addington have not been forgotten, it will be seen that the course he now adopted

was strictly in accordance with the opinions he then expressed as to the only conditions on which men who had been long opposed to each other in public, could honourably come together either in or out of office.

Mr. Perceval's overture having been thus rejected by the Opposition leaders, the Government was at length reconstituted, though not till the month of November following, under Mr. Perceval himself, who added the office of First Lord of the Treasury to that which he already held of Chancellor of the Exchequer. Of this arrangement, and of the delay that took place in effecting it, my father thus writes: 'I always be-
'lieved that the King would encourage his Ministers
'to try anything rather than abdicate the Government;
'and I also believed them to be men not to stick at
'trifles; but I confess I had no idea that they would
'have the courage, or the folly (which should it be
'called?), to keep the country without a Govern-
'ment for two months, and, after all, to venture
'upon such an Administration as has at last been
'formed.'

Considering that on the declaration of the Regency, in little more than a year from this time, the Prince of Wales continued the Administration thus formed in office, and that he confirmed them in power at the expiration of the year of restrictions, it is amusing to read Colonel M'Mahon's account of the manner in which His Royal Highness now received the notification of the

formation of Mr. Perceval's Government. 'The Prince,' Colonel M'Mahon writes to my father, 'further de-
'sires me to say that he is only prevented, at this in-
'stant, from writing to you himself, by the laughter
'which so *ludicrous a circumstance* has necessarily excited.' ! !

The Government thus reconstituted, weak as it was in talent, and low as it stood in the estimation of the public, was strong in the support of the Crown, and in the continued divisions of the parties in Opposition; and notwithstanding that it was defeated in the House of Commons on the 26th January 1810, on a motion for inquiry into the policy and conduct of the expedition to the Scheldt, when the Opposition was united for the moment, it maintained its ground successfully against all attacks, till violently terminated, two years later, by the assassination of Mr. Perceval in the lobby of the House of Commons.

A short notice will suffice for most of the questions that were agitated in Parliament during the Session of 1810. To enter into any lengthened detail of them would only be to reproduce, as far as my father was concerned in the discussions that took place, the expression of opinions which have been already sufficiently explained.

He concurred entirely in the condemnation so generally felt and expressed regarding the Walcheren expedition, on the ground that the object itself was perfectly unattainable, and if attainable, that it could have

no effect whatever on the general result of the war. 'When he held the seals of the Foreign Department,' he said in the Debate on the Address at the opening of the Session, 'the expedition to the Scheldt, which had 'been undertaken by the present Ministers, had been 'frequently pressed upon him, he therefore turned his 'attention to it, and after making every due inquiry, 'he was convinced that the object of destroying the 'arsenals at Antwerp and the shipping in the Scheldt 'was not attainable.' But he objected to this expedition still more as part of a system of frittering away our force in isolated and unconnected efforts, when it was most essential to a successful conduct of the war, that our resources should be husbanded with care, and, if we would effect any great purpose, that they should be concentrated and directed, in undivided power, to one well-considered and practical end. This was certainly not the principle on which 40,000 men had been employed in the Scheldt, 15,000 in Sicily, and 45,000 in the Peninsula.

With regard to the operations in the latter quarter, he felt it to be a painful duty, while doing full justice to the gallantry and good conduct of the officers and men who had fought at Talavera, and speaking at the same time of Lord Wellington as an able, active, and enterprising officer, to object to the vote of thanks proposed by Ministers for that battle. The thanks of Parliament, he maintained, were only properly bestowed for decisive victories, followed by all the con-

sequences of victory.* This could not be said of Talavera. The enemy was indeed repulsed, but he was not defeated. He retired in good order, and took up a position where we could not venture to attack him, within sight of the field of battle. On the other hand we were ourselves compelled to retreat in order to extricate the army from a position of great peril, leaving our sick and wounded to the care of the Spaniards, the result of which was that they fell into the hands of the enemy. There was also, as it appeared to him, a culpable want of information as to the strength and positions of the French, and an undue reliance on Spanish co-operation, which, after the experience already acquired, could not be excused.

But having stated his objections to the vote of thanks to the general (not, however pushing them to a division), he gave his hearty concurrence to those proposed for the officers and men of the army, who had, he said, 'done their duty in the most admirable 'manner.'

The majority against the Government on the question of the Scheldt expedition, had led to revived reports of a change in the Administration; and my

* Lord Liverpool himself admitted this principle in moving a vote of thanks to Lord Wellington, in 1814, when he said, 'he was perfectly 'ready to admit that it was not merely a brilliant action that was en- 'titled to that high honour.' But he defended the former deviation from this principle at the time of the battle of Talavera, by adding, 'Six years ago when victory appeared a stranger to every standard in 'Europe except that of France, it became highly expedient to court the 'first advances of victory on the part of this country,' &c.

father writes, on the 30th January 1810: 'My specu-
'lation is that a new proposal will be made to us, not
'so much for the purpose of obtaining our services, as
'for that of making out a case which shall deprive us
'of the support of the public; and this attempt will,
'I think, be successful. We shall break off on the
'Catholic Question, and I am convinced there will be
'a greater clamour against us than on any former
'occasion.'

That question was again in agitation, and the proceedings of the Irish Catholics were as embarrassing as ever to its real friends. Lord Grenville had at length felt it necessary, in consequence of the course they were now pursuing, to write to Lord Fingall in the sense of the declaration advised by my father in 1808 on the repudiation of the veto by the bishops.* Of this letter my father says (February 3, 1810): 'I
'am sorry you do not approve of Lord Grenville's
'letter, as my advice had a material influence in its
'being written. We must look not only at what is
'necessary to gratify the feelings of the Catholics, but
'to what is due to our own characters and to the feel-
'ings and opinions of the people here.

'Whilst the Catholics of Ireland, acting under the
'influence of persons whose views are of the most
'mischievous nature, reject all reasonable measures,
'all attempts to carry their question must be hopeless.
'We have, besides, a duty imposed upon us not to

* See preceding Chapter, page 208 *et seq.*

'acquiesce in pretensions which, both in themselves, 'and much more in the manner of urging them, are 'quite unjustifiable. In such circumstances it ap- 'peared to me that the only line we could take, either 'with advantage to them or with honour to ourselves, 'was, at the same time that we gave them what must 'be considered by all reasonable men as a sufficient 'pledge of our sincerity, to endeavour to bring them 'back to a more reasonable consideration of their own 'interests; and on the other hand, to prove to the 'people of this country that in contending for the ad- 'mission of the Catholics to the full enjoyment of the 'civil constitution of their country, we are not indif- 'ferent as to the best means of securing our own 'establishments, civil and religious.' It is with a view 'to this double effect that Lord Grenville's letter was 'written.' . . . 'Determined as I am,' he adds, 'not 'to accept office without the concession of full power 'to settle this difficult question immediately, these 'previous steps will, I think, also be useful in showing 'the reasonableness of our views, though I doubt much 'whether they will be sufficient to obviate the clamour 'which, after such a refusal, I foresee will be raised 'against us.'

The effect of the letter in Ireland disappointed my father's expectations, without, however, changing his opinion as to its propriety. 'The accounts from 'Ireland,' he writes, on the 5th of February, 'are 'very bad. Lord Grenville's letter has been very

'badly received, and the violent party are doing all 'they can, and, I fear, with too much success, to 'inflame the body of the Catholics. I do not, how- 'ever, alter my opinion with respect to the propriety 'of the measure, though what I hear increases my 'regret that it was not taken when I first proposed it.'

On the 22nd of February my father presented the petition of the English Catholics to the House of Lords, but stated at the same time that considering 'all the circumstances of the case in another part of 'His Majesty's dominions,' he did not intend to make any motion on the subject during the present Session. He saw the hopelessness of success unless some check could be given to the course pursued by the violent party in Ireland. The unprincipled men, however, who composed that party found their own advantage in the agitation they kept up for so many years; and to them, fully as much as to the selfish English politicians who were content to compromise their opinions on this important question for the sake of office (and to both these parties, much more than to the regular opponents of Catholic Emancipation), may be ascribed the long and injurious delay that took place in its settlement.

But when Lord Donoughmore, in presenting the petition from the Irish Catholics, moved that it should be referred to the consideration of a Committee, true to the principle he had ever professed, of giving his most zealous support to the question whenever it was

brought forward, however unseasonable he might himself consider the discussion, my father made a powerful speech in favour of the motion. He did not, however, conceal, in the course of it, his opinion of the unfortunate consequences resulting from the conduct of the bishops on the veto, and explained clearly the principles on which he had ever acted in accordance with the expressed opinions of Mr. Fox in advocating the measure of Emancipation.

Notwithstanding the appearance of union in the Opposition displayed by the majority against Government in the House of Commons on the question of the Scheldt expedition, the state of the parties composing it had at no time been more unsatisfactory, and the conduct and language of the violent section had latterly become such as to make it imperative both in my father's and Lord Grenville's opinion that they should publicly disclaim being parties to them.

The doctrine which has now become so fashionable did not then prevail: that the leader of a party, whether in or out of office, was justified, in exchange for the votes of his followers when they were required on a great emergency, in allowing them at other times the utmost license of language and conduct. Even in Opposition, the leader of a party then felt himself bound to control, or if he could not control, to disavow, the proceedings of his followers whenever they overstepped those limits of discretion and moderation within which he thought they ought to be confined.

Thus, on the occasion of a dinner given by the

Livery of London to Mr. Whitbread, at which the language used seems to have been more than ordinarily violent, Lord Grenville had thought it necessary publicly to mark his disapprobation of it; and having communicated to my father the steps he had taken for that purpose, the latter, writing from Woburn, thus replies—

'I cannot give you a stronger proof of my concurrence in the propriety of the measure itself, and of the sentiments which you have expressed, than by telling you that in my way hither, in conversing on this matter, I expressed to Tierney, who accompanied me, my wish that you might be induced to do exactly what you have done.' . . . 'But whatever we may ultimately resolve upon, whether to persevere in a regular Opposition, reduced as it must be in numbers, and standing between two parties to whose views, in opposite ways, we are equally hostile; or to withdraw ourselves from a very constant and active attendance in Parliament; it is equally necessary, considering what we owe both to the country and to our own character, that we should mark by some such declaration as you propose, the principles upon which we act.' . . . After stating his objections to one or two modes that had been suggested for effecting this object, he proceeds: 'Now I should be anxious to mark equally the line of distinction between us and the Ministers on the one hand, and those who are urging these popular questions in such pernicious modes on the other. It had occurred to me,

'therefore, that the best way of doing this would be 'to move an address to the King, containing a general 'statement of the different circumstances which menace 'the safety of the country, in which all these topics 'might be introduced. This being done in both 'Houses would mark clearly to the country the prin-'ciples on which we act, in such a manner as ought to 'be above suspicion, and would also show what is the 'number and character of those on whom, acting upon 'these principles, we can depend for support.

'Should this plan appear to you advisable, such a 'motion would naturally come after the other great 'subjects, such as the Spanish and Catholic questions, 'are disposed of; and would, I think, be a satisfactory 'way of winding up the Session. If you approve of 'it I should have no objection to move such an 'address, unless you feel that it would be more proper 'for you to do it yourself. In drawing it up great 'care will be required, and for this we must necessarily 'rely chiefly on you.'

The course my father thus suggested seems to have been only partially adopted, for I cannot find that any address, in the sense proposed, was moved in the House of Commons. But on the 13th of June, in accordance with the views above expressed, he himself moved an address to the King in the House of Lords, on the state of the nation. In the course of the speech in introducing that motion, he marked strongly the difference between himself and those of whose conduct

he had expressed such strong disapprobation, more particularly on the two questions then most violently agitated out of doors—those of Parliamentary Reform and the Privileges of Parliament.

The subject of the latter, of which my father was ever a stout upholder, had become involved in a question that had been raised relative to the printing and publication of the debates in the House of Commons. A Mr. Gale Jones, President of a debating society called the 'British Forum,' had spoken of the proceedings of the House in enforcing their orders on this subject, in a manner that had been unanimously voted to be a breach of privilege, for which, by another vote of the House, he had been committed to Newgate. The power of committal thus claimed by the House of Commons, had, however, been loudly called in question, and the part taken by Sir Francis Burdett in the discussions that arose, and more particularly a letter written by him on the subject to his constituents, had also been voted by the House to be a flagrant breach of their privileges, and had led to his committal also to the Tower.

This was the signal for the most violent outbreak, not confined to mere language on the part of the Radicals, as the violent party now grew to be called. Riots ensued, on the occasion of Sir Francis Burdett's being conveyed to the Tower, resulting in loss of life; and petitions poured in from all parts of the country,

adopted at meetings where the most inflammatory language was used, praying for what was termed a 'Radical Reform' of Parliament, and for the liberation of Sir Francis Burdett and Mr. Gale Jones.

Such proceedings, which had been at all times most repugnant to my father's feelings, received, in his opinion, only too much encouragement from some of the violent members of Opposition in the House of Commons; and he was besides, as I have already remarked, a stout upholder of the privileges of Parliament. He took advantage, therefore, of the opportunity afforded by this motion, to mark, in a manner which should admit of no mistake, after a strong expression of the grounds on which he disapproved of the measures and general policy of the Government, and of the principles on which they acted, his equally strong dissent from the views and proceedings of the Radical Reformers, and of those who called the privileges of the House of Commons in question.

On the subject of Parliamentary Reform, after alluding to the 'strong opinions which he took up at 'an early period of his life, and pursued with all that 'eager hope and sanguine expectation so natural to 'the ardour of youth,' he said, that 'the general 'opinions he then formed, he had not, in his maturer 'age, seen cause to change; and whatever distinction 'might exist between his early and his present views 'of Reform, on its great grounds, that question had 'not been abandoned by him.' He freely acknow-

ledged that a degree of difference did exist between his former and his present impressions, and he added: 'He, indeed, must either have been prematurely wise, 'or must have learnt little by experience, who, after a 'lapse of twenty years, can look upon a subject of this 'nature in all respects precisely in the same light. 'Still,' he said, 'after as serious and dispassionate a 'consideration as he could give to what he believed to 'be the most important question that could employ 'their Lordships' attention, it was his conscientious 'opinion that much good would result from the 'adoption of the salutary principles of Reform, gra-'dually applied to the correction of those existing 'abuses, to which the progress of time must unavoid-'ably have given birth; taking especial care that the 'measure of Reform should be marked out by the 'Constitution itself, and in no case exceed its whole-'some limits.' . . . 'I, therefore,' he proceeded, 'am ready to declare my determination to abide by 'the sentiments I have before expressed, and that I 'am now, as I was formerly, the advocate of a tem-'perate, gradual, and judicious correction of those 'defects which time has introduced, and of those 'abuses in the constitution of the other House of 'Parliament, which give most scandal to the public, 'at the same time that they furnish designing men 'with a pretext for inflaming the minds of the mul-'titude, only to mislead them from their true interest.' He then went on to express his disapproval of those

theoretic notions, and those general and vague speculations, which it was the 'folly and presumption of 'the present day' to adopt; and his dissent from those 'dangerous errors which were not then for the 'first time propagated in this country by mischievous 'or misguided men;' supporting his argument by the authority of Mr. Fox, 'than whom,' he said, 'there 'never existed one who more fully understood the 'principles, or more affectionately appreciated the 'blessings of the venerable Constitution under which 'he lived. If in his political creed there was one 'article which he held more steadfastly than another, 'it was, that while a system was practically good, he 'would always abstain from mending it by theories.'

'Never, my Lords,' my father said, 'can I forget 'his powerful observations when, in his place in 'Parliament, he stated his conviction of the absolute 'impossibility of providing for all the variety of 'human events, by any previous speculative plans. 'For, said he, I think that if a number of the wisest, 'ablest, and most virtuous men that ever adorned and 'improved human life, were collected together and 'seated round a table, to devise, à priori, a Constitu-'tion for a State, it is my persuasion that, notwith-'standing all their ability and virtue, they would not 'succeed in adapting a system to the purposes re-'quired, but must necessarily leave it to be fitted by 'great alterations in the practice, and many deviations 'from the original design. And this opinion he was wont to illustrate by the familiar but apt example of

'building a house, which, notwithstanding all the 'study and consideration previously bestowed upon 'the plan, was never yet known to supply every 'want, or to provide all the accommodation which, in 'the subsequent occupation of it, were found to be 'necessary. Nay, he used to remark, that however 'fine to look at, a regular paper plan might be, 'no house was so habitable and so commodious as one 'which was built from time to time—piecemeal, and 'without any regular design.'

'To the principles of practical Reform,' my father continued, 'so wisely enforced by that great states-'man, he was determined to adhere,' again repeating, 'that the remedy he sought should be limited by the 'existing defects, should be marked out by the Con-'stitution itself, and that he would not launch 'out into any extravagance of theory, which even 'appearances might recommend.' . . . These opinions were the same as he had held in 1792, when, as one of the Society of the Friends of the people, 'it was 'his fate then, as it was now, to have their motives 'and conduct made the subject of great and unmerited 'obloquy by the same description of persons who now 'describe us as no sincere friends to Reform—no real 'advocates for the rights of the people—because we 'were not prepared to support what was then, as it 'is now, called, and most falsely called, a Radical 'Reform.'

My father then quoted the declaration which, in consequence of the proceedings of other societies, with

which they declined all intercourse, the Friends of the People thought it right to make in 1792, explanatory of the moderate and constitutional principles on which they had themselves acted on this question.

'We profess not,' it was stated in this declaration, 'to entertain a wish that the great plans of public 'benefit which Mr. Paine has so powerfully recommended should be carried into effect; nor to amuse 'our fellow-citizens with the magnificent promise of 'obtaining for them the Rights of the People in their 'full extent—the indefinite language of delusion 'which, by opening unbounded prospects of political 'adventure, tends to destroy that public opinion which 'is the support of all true Governments, and to excite 'a spirit of innovation of which no wisdom can foresee 'the effect, nor skill divert the course. We view man 'as he is, the creature of habit as well as of reason. 'We think it, therefore, our bounden duty to propose 'no extreme changes, which, however specious in 'theory, can never be accomplished without violence 'to the settled opinions of mankind, nor attempted 'without endangering some of the most inestimable advantages we enjoy. We are convinced that the people 'bear a fixed attachment to the happy form of our 'Government, and to the genuine principles of the 'Constitution. These we cherish as the objects of 'such attachment, not from any implicit reverence or 'habitual superstition, but as institutions best calculated to produce the happiness of man in civil society;

'and it is because we are convinced that abuses are 'undermining and corrupting them, that we have 'associated for the preservation of those principles. 'We wish to reform the Constitution, because we wish 'to preserve it.' This declaration, which concluded with declining all further intercourse with a Society whose views appeared to be 'irreconcileable with 'those real interests' on which the Society of the Friends of the People 'professed to inform and en- 'lighten the people,' was signed by the late Duke of Bedford, then Lord John Russell.

My father then added: 'These are the opinions 'now censured and misrepresented by the very same 'men with whom I still disclaim all intercourse or co- 'operation.' And he concludes his remarks on the subject by declaring: 'The only Reform which alone 'I will support is that which amends—not that which 'would subvert the Constitution. The change which I 'desire to see effected by temperate and constitutional 'means, is one which has for its object the restoration 'not the ruin of the Government. When I act, my 'Lords, it will be in opposition to men, who, under the 'pretext of Reform, would drive us into wild and 'extravagant theories, wholly inconsistent with the 'fundamental principles of our system.'

Here spoke the true Conservative statesman! Strange, that so many years should yet have to elapse, before those who professed more particularly to be the champions of the Constitution, could learn

what appears to us at the present day the self-evident truth—that to maintain an admitted abuse from fear of the possible lengths to which innovation (as it was called) might be pushed, was a source of weakness, not of strength, to the cause they supported.

Having thus once more placed upon record the principles on which he had ever supported the question of Parliamentary Reform, my father expressed an equal anxiety 'to meet and correct those pernicious 'errors, which are industriously propagated out of 'doors, respecting the privileges of Parliament.' These privileges he considered to 'rest upon their known 'utility, and upon their being necessary for preserving 'that freedom of discussion and power of inquiry, 'without which Parliament would be incapacitated 'from discharging its most important functions. . . . 'Deprived of such powers what security has Parliament? What security have the people, for that just 'and unprejudiced discussion, for that freedom of 'deliberation, and for those ministerial functions on 'which, above all other privileges, our most valuable 'rights depend? . . . And though such powers should 'be carried to the extent of imprisoning persons guilty 'of a contempt of its authority, it must still be remembered that they are exercised for the protection of 'the people, and the maintenance of public liberty. . .

'Against what obstructions,' he proceeds to ask, 'is it that the privileges of Parliament are intended 'to provide? Is it not against the influence of the

'Crown? Certainly, my Lords; and there is no man 'who would go further than I would in opposition 'to an unjustifiable exercise of that influence. But is 'it not possible for other persons to excite against 'Parliament a popular indignation, equally fatal to 'that uncontrolled discussion which constitutes its 'essence? If its deliberations may be interrupted by 'popular insult and commotion, as well as by Royal 'encroachment—if its decisions can be made the 'subject of the most degrading calumnies, and widely-'extended slanders—is not the "Civium ardor prava 'jubentium" as necessary to be resisted as the uncon-'stitutional invasion of the Crown upon its freedom? 'In either case, Parliament, I contend, must possess 'a power commensurate to the evil, to be exercised 'internally and separately by either House, without 'recurring to any other branch of the legislature.'

This doctrine he proceeded to show was that of our ancestors. It had been held by the best and ablest of our statesmen ever since the Revolution. It was the doctrine of Mr. Fox, of Mr. Pitt, Mr. Burke, and other leading men of that day. 'But,' he added, 'I 'will not rest my argument upon authorities however 'eminent and distinguished. It stands upon the 'broad basis I have already stated—of general utility, 'and the absolute necessity of such powers, in order 'to preserve to Parliament the due exercise of those 'important functions with which it is entrusted.'

Having, then, combated the 'popular arguments

'which,' he said, 'had been employed to excite in the 'public mind an aversion to the existence of those 'privileges,'—having shown how little Sir Francis Burdett was entitled, by his conduct on this question, 'to hold himself forth as a martyr in the same good 'old cause for which Hampden died in the field 'and Sydney and Russell on the scaffold:' 'the 'functions of the Crown,' he proceeded, 'are those of 'benignity and mercy; and it is impossible in their 'exercise to bring the Monarch into such a conflict 'with the passions and prejudices of his people as 'would render such a power necessary. . . But with 'regard to Parliament the case was widely different. 'Parliament has often to originate harsh measures. 'From it spring all the revenue laws; indeed, all their 'ordinances are restraints upon the people; and, as 'Mr. Burke observed, the very imposition of taxes 'brings them and the people into perpetual conflict 'with each other. But though severe and unpalat- 'able, their measures are still necessary, and they 'ought to possess the means and power of protection 'against any effort of popular discontent.'

Resolved, therefore, to assist to the utmost of his power in upholding privileges, the maintenance of which he considered so essential to the best interests of the country, he thus concluded: 'In following this 'course I am by no means insensible to the danger of 'misrepresentation which I incur, nor of the obloquy 'to which my motives and conduct will probably be

'exposed. I know how easy it would have been to 'have taken up the popular side of the question, and 'meanly to have courted popular applause at the 'expense of sincerity and principle. But such a 'line is little suited to the habits of my life; still less 'consistent with the feelings and principles by which 'my public conduct has been governed. I am not, 'however, ignorant,' he said, with that indignation which the proceedings out of doors had so justly excited, 'of the degrading artifices by which this 'applause is acquired,—artifices with which neither 'virtue nor talents have any connection,—arts which 'men possessed of neither are best fitted to practise— 'men such as we have lived to see in the present day, 'who, renouncing the obligations of faith and honour, 'breaking through all the bonds and engagements 'that hold society together, have, in their career of 'foul slander and dirty calumny, entirely set them- 'selves above all the decencies of private life—above 'all the courtesies which men who really endeavour 'to discharge their duty, willingly concede to their 'adversaries. For such arts, and for those who have 'recourse to them, I shall ever feel a sovereign con- 'tempt; by me they can never be practised, even to 'acquire the highest favour that my country can 'bestow. It is true I cannot but feel a deep regret 'if I should see myself deprived of my popularity by 'any misunderstanding of my views and objects on 'the part of the people. This is, however, a sacrifice

'which I am compelled to make in common with men 'in all ages much greater than I can ever hope to be. 'But, my Lords, it excites my warmest indignation 'to be robbed of it through the basest misrepresenta- 'tions and vilest delusions, practised by men who, 'without any regard to truth, sacrifice every virtuous 'and truly patriotic object to the shouts of a vulgar 'clamour. Yet even to this mortification I can submit 'with patience, feeling that it is the result of a defect 'inherent in all free Governments. It has indeed 'been truly said, that, in the distribution of her 'favours, popularity is as blind and fickle as fortune. 'If it should follow my humble efforts in that pursuit 'which I feel to be alone compatible with mine own 'honour and my country's interests, I would hail it 'as a most grateful proof of having faithfully dis- 'charged my duty; but if I am reduced to the 'alternative between popularity and freedom of 'thought and action, I cannot ever hesitate a moment 'what decision to make.

'Laudo manentem. Si celeres quatit
'Pennas, resigno quæ dedit, probamque
'Pauperiem sine dote quæro.'

'Under every sacrifice I never could endure that 'hardest of all servitudes, that lowest of all degrada- 'tions, that most despicable and abandoned of all 'pursuits—the deep and inexpiable guilt of flattering 'the worst passions of a capricious multitude, only to 'delude and betray them!'

He could no more condescend, then, as a leader of the Opposition, to conceal or compromise his opinions for the sake of popularity out of doors or support in Parliament, than he could in later times stoop to the degradation (too commonly submitted to since his time) of standing, as he himself expressed it, the 'shadow of a Minister,' unable to guide the course of his own policy, in order to retain power.

But the violence of an extreme party was not the only danger which threatened the unity of Opposition in 1810. Towards the end of that year the return of the King's malady had again raised the question of a Regency; and this was the source of a much more legitimate fear lest the good understanding which had so far existed between my father and Lord Grenville, as the leaders of the different parties composing the Opposition, might not be maintained.

When the question was last discussed in 1788, Lord Grenville, as a member of Mr. Pitt's Government, which proposed to proceed by Bill, and my father, as a follower and supporter of Mr. Fox, who stoutly upheld the inherent right of the Prince of Wales to supply, as heir apparent to the Crown, the want occasioned by the incapacity of the King, and who argued that the proper mode of proceeding was by address to his Royal Highness to assume that authority which of right belonged to him, had been directly opposed to each other on a question of constitutional principle which admitted of no compromise. And as

Ministers now proposed to adopt the precedent of 1788 in all the proceedings rendered necessary by the King's present illness, the same question of principle came again into discussion, on which the Opposition leaders must necessarily be again divided against each other.

That spirit of forbearance, however, which had hitherto distinguished their political connection, and on which, indeed, it had been originally founded, succeeded in averting this danger, and that too without the slightest compromise of principle, or unworthy concealment of opinion on either part.

On both sides the principles which had guided the conduct of each in 1788 were again avowed, but without any unnecessary vehemence, or any revival, except on the part of some of the more violent members of the House of Commons, of bygone differences.

In fact, the difference between those who advocated the procedure by Bill, and those who supported that by Address, was only one as to the means by which an end, equally desired by both parties, was to be arrived at. All agreed as to the Prince of Wales being the proper person in whom the authority and functions of the Sovereign should be vested during the incapacity of the King, and the only question was, whether he was to receive that authority as delegated to him by the two Houses, or to assume it as an

* Sir Samuel Romilly, in particular, made a violent attack on the system of Mr. Pitt, in a speech of which he himself says, in his Diary, that it gave as much displeasure to the leaders of the Opposition as to the Government.

inherent right, belonging to him as heir apparent to the Crown. Lord Holland, on the 27th December, in moving his amendment to the second resolution of Government, affirming the right of Parliament, &c., said: 'It 'was a resolution on which there was a recorded differ- 'ence of opinion. . . . Some persons thought the Heir 'Apparent had a right to the office of Regent, some 'thought the right to appoint was vested in the two 'Houses. All these jarring opinions, these metaphy- 'sical niceties in discussion, resolved themselves into 'arguments of logic and grammar. But all men knew 'there could be but one Regent, and the universal 'wish was that the Royal authority should be con- 'ferred on the Heir Apparent.'

An important constitutional principle was no doubt involved in the question, and one that could not lightly be put on one side for the sake of agreement; but this point once decided, the accordance between the Opposition leaders on other points was as cordial as ever, and any hopes that the Government might have entertained of exciting dissension between them on this subject were happily disappointed.

My father did not, however, himself attend the discussions that now took place on this question. He had gone up to town, indeed, on the first announcement of the King's illness, and waited till the expiration of a second adjournment of a fortnight, to which he and Lord Grenville had equally objected, without, however, pushing their opposition beyond objections in

debate, no division being taken on the subject. 'We 'have determined,' my father writes, 'to acquiesce 'under a strong protest.' . . . 'I should have been 'for more vigorous measures, but excessive prudence 'is the order of the day.' But when on the 29th of November, in consequence of a report from the physicians examined before the Privy Council on the 28th, favourable to the hope of a re-establishment of the King's health, Ministers proposed and carried a further adjournment to the 13th of December, my father at once returned to Northumberland. He had, in fact, remained in town most reluctantly even for so long. He was extremely anxious to get home in consequence of my mother's expected confinement; and in writing to Mr. Whitbread, shortly after his return, to announce that event, he said, 'I would not have been 'absent, to be myself Regent or King.'

But though thus prevented from taking any personal part in the discussions on the preliminary resolutions proposed by Government, or in the debates on the method * proposed for giving a legal existence to the Parliament, my father's friends had the full benefit of his opinions in writing; and the proceedings of the Whig party in the House of Lords, in opposition to the course pursued by Ministers, was entirely in

* Of this method Lord Holland said that it had been 'ludicrously, 'but happily and accurately called by its opponents "the Phantom."' And by this name, during the discussions upon it, the proceeding by which Ministers proposed to imply the Royal Assent to their measures, was very generally known.

accordance with the advice given in the following extracts from a letter of the 17th December to Lord Holland :—

'If the Ministers intend,' he writes, 'to follow, *ver* 'batim et literatim, the precedent of 1788, they will 'begin, I presume, with resolutions ;—for these, how- 'ever, there cannot now be urged the same pretence. 'There has now been no assertion of right, nor any 'claim made, or insinuated, which can be stated, as it 'was then, to be a bar to the functions of the two 'Houses. Such resolutions would now, therefore, be 'a mere gratuitous assertion of a right which, though 'perhaps disputable, has not been disputed, and are 'calculated, therefore, only to recal differences, to 'create divisions, and to produce an unnecessary 'delay in a proceeding which nobody can now con- 'tend ought to be delayed beyond what absolute 'necessity may render unavoidable. These resolu- 'tions should therefore, I think, be in the first in- 'stance objected to on this ground, and the Previous 'Question moved upon them.

'If this should not be thought expedient, as creating 'a superfluous debate (the force of which objection I 'acknowledge), or if the question should be lost, you 'must then amend the Resolutions, it being impossible 'for us to assent to them in the form in which they 'were moved in 1788. And as I thought it might 'save you some trouble, or at least afford a ground 'for deliberation, I have drawn up what follows, the

'difference of which from the votes of 1788 you will 'see by comparing them together.

'1st. Being a resolution of fact, merely stating the 'King's illness, requires no alteration.

'2nd. That for supplying the defect of the personal 'exercise of the Royal authority arising from His Ma- 'jesty's said indisposition, it is necessary that the Lords 'spiritual and temporal, and Commons of the United 'Kingdom now assembled, and fully and freely represent- 'ing all the estates of the people of these realms, should 'take such measures as the exigency of the case re- 'quires; and that in all such measures it is their duty 'strictly to conform themselves to the principles of the 'Constitution as essentially connected with the preser- 'vation of hereditary monarchy, and of the established 'line of succession to the Crown of these kingdoms.

'3rd. That His Royal Highness the Prince of 'Wales, being of mature age, be requested to assume 'and take upon himself the exercise of the powers and 'authorities of the Crown, in the name, and on the 'behalf of the King, during the continuance of His 'Majesty's present indisposition.

'4th. That an address founded on this resolution be 'presented to His Royal Highness the Prince of 'Wales, requesting him to assume and take upon him- 'self the Executive Government as aforesaid, and that 'the further opinion of, &c., &c.; that it will be expe- 'dient to abstain from the exercise of all such powers 'as the immediate exigencies of the State shall not

'call into action, until Parliament shall have passed a 'Bill or Bills for the future custody of the Royal per- 'son, and for securing to His Majesty, whenever it 'shall please the Divine Providence to restore his 'health, the resumption of his Royal authority, be at 'the same time, and in the same manner, communi- 'cated to His Royal Highness.

'You will observe that in the second resolution I 'have been careful to omit the assertion of the *right** 'of the two Houses, which is more particularly ob- 'jectionable when coupled with the words at the end 'of the resolution of 1788, which imply a right of free 'election, and have endeavoured to describe the pro- 'ceeding which it falls to them, there being no other 'body on which such a duty can devolve, to take, as 'a proceeding created by necessity, and strictly limited 'by the principles of the Constitution. From the 'necessity thus established, and the duty thus de- 'scribed, flows as of inevitable consequence the mea- 'sure of addressing the Prince to take upon himself 'the Government during the King's indisposition, 'which is expressed in the third resolution. But I 'have added a fourth, in the hope that the last clause 'in it may, under the circumstances supposed at the

* In moving an amendment to the second resolution, as recommended by my father, Lord Holland declined to enter into a discussion of this principle. 'The difference of opinion which existed,' he said, 'was already recorded in the journals, and he always thought it dan- 'gerous to debate abstract questions, for the introduction of which 'there was no necessity.'

'beginning of this letter, reconcile Lord Grenville, or 'at least some of those who were implicated with the 'Government of 1788, to this mode of proceeding. 'The words I have adopted have been carefully framed 'to prevent our being supposed to imply any opinion 'as to the expediency, in any case, of any limitations 'on the power of the Regent. They leave it open, 'however, to those who think such limitations right 'and necessary, to propose them, and impose as strong 'a restraint as the united authority of the two Houses 'can impose on the Regent, with respect to the exer- 'cise of all such powers as can be supposed to be the 'subject of limitations, till the matter shall have been 'discussed in a Parliament legally composed of the 'Three Estates.'

In the commencement of this letter my father had alluded to the probability of Ministers being 'driven 'to the necessity of proposing some measure for the 'issue of money, which, in any form that such a thing 'can be done,' he said, 'appeared to him so decided an 'usurpation of the Royal authority in one of its most 'important functions, and so complete a subversion of 'the securities of the Constitution, as far as they may 'depend upon the principles of an hereditary monarchy '. . . . that he could not help believing that Lord 'Grenville, feeling himself compelled to choose between 'this, and what we contend to be the ample, correct, 'and only constitutional course, will determine in 'favour of the latter.'

While, however, my father was thus anxious, in framing resolutions which should express his opinions and principles on the constitutional question that was now under discussion, to do so in the manner most likely to remove Lord Grenville's difficulties in coinciding with them, he felt that the open and decided assertion of those principles must be the first object. And if, notwithstanding all his endeavours to avoid it, the division of the party should be the result, 'the 'case is too important,' he writes to Mr. Whitbread, 'not to impose upon us the duty of maintaining our 'own opinions, and of moving an address to the Prince 'to assume the functions of the King during his inca-'pacity, as the plainest, the most direct, and only 'constitutional mode of supplying that deficiency.'

The course suggested by my father was exactly followed in the House of Lords; and Ministers having proposed the resolutions which had been adopted in 1788, Lord Holland moved amended ones, nearly word for word as they had been drawn up by my father.

It is no part of my purpose to give any account of the debates which took place on the subject; but I may mention that one main argument against the proposal of Ministers was based upon the ground of its being an infringement upon the prerogatives of the Crown, which was, in fact, an infringement of the rights of the people. 'I contend,' Lord Holland said, 'that these 'prerogatives have been conferred for their security— 'that they are a part of their rights—that unless

'necessary to their interests and conducive to their 'safety, they ought not to exist at all—but being their 'right, and being necessary for their security and wel- 'fare, there exists no other power but that of a full 'Parliament competent to wrest them from them.'

My father also spoke on a subsequent occasion of the Royal prerogatives as 'not given for the personal 'advantage of the monarch,' but as 'trusts vested for 'the benefit and advantage of the people.'

The opposition to the Government proposal was followed by the result which my father had anticipated; 'for do not imagine,' he says in concluding the letter above quoted, 'because in some parts of what I have 'written respecting the amended resolutions, I have 'expressed myself as if they might be carried, that I 'think there is the smallest chance of such a result. 'I have no doubt that the Ministers will carry sub- 'stantially whatever they propose.' And so indeed it proved. The amendments were all negatived; the third and fourth resolutions, as drawn up by my father (moved as a single resolution by Lord Holland), the only ones which were pressed to a division, being rejected by a majority of one hundred to seventy-four.

Lord Grenville voted in the majority, and reasserted in the debate the principles on which the Government of 1788 had acted. But the division which had been apprehended as likely to result from the opposite views entertained on this question by the different parties in Opposition, did not occur. Lord Grenville stated the

grounds on which he differed from his present friends on this point temperately and calmly: nor was the cordiality with which he acted with them on every other point, interrupted for a single moment by this partial difference of opinion.

The preliminary resolutions having been carried, they were followed by five others defining the conditions and limitations under which it was proposed to confer, by Bill, the Regency on the Prince of Wales; and these having been agreed to, after considerable discussion, during which several amendments were carried in both Houses against the Government, they were communicated to the Prince by a joint deputation from the Lords and Commons on the 11th of January 1811.

My father had been unavoidably detained in the country during the whole of these discussions, and only arrived in London a day or two before Lord Liverpool moved the final resolution, to declare it expedient that letters patent should now issue under the Great Seal, 'on the authority of the two Houses,' to name a commission for opening the Parliament in the usual form, simply adding after the words 'by the 'King himself,' the additional sentence, 'by the advice 'of the Lords spiritual and temporal, and Commons of 'the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.' The House of Commons having concurred in the resolution, the 'phantom' was duly constituted. Legal effect being thus given to the course of proceeding

which had been resolved upon, my father took that opportunity of shortly expressing his full and entire concurrence in the sentiments expressed by his friends during his absence, on the principle of the proceeding proposed by Ministers. 'Now that the period is 'arrived,' he added, 'when this House is called upon 'to join in affixing, by its own authority, the Great 'Seal to a commission for the purpose of procuring the 'sanction of the Royal name, it is impossible for me 'to neglect this opportunity of entering my formal 'protest against that proceeding—a proceeding, my 'Lords, which, in my estimation, formed upon all the 'inferences that I can draw from the analogies of the 'Constitution, the spirit of our laws, and the practice 'of our ancestors, is at once unprecedented and unjus-'tifiable. It goes, in my opinion, under the form of 'law, to violate all law; professing to preserve the 'Constitution, it counteracts its most essential prin-'ciples; and pretending a scrupulous regard to the 'monarchy, it tends to subvert the foundations on 'which it stands.'

On his way up to London my father had been met by letters informing him that the Prince had 'at last 'sent for Lord Grenville, and had also required his' (my father's) 'presence.' His Royal Highness, who up to this time had always identified himself to a certain degree with the Opposition, was universally believed to entertain the intention of changing the Government as soon as he should be established as

Regent. And he now gave public evidence of this intention, by referring it to my father and Lord Grenville to draw up an answer to the communication from the two Houses already referred to. But what occurred respecting that answer gave a sad foretaste of the difficulties which were likely to be thrown in the way of the Prince's Ministers, whoever they might be, by the secret advisers of Carlton House. My father, in writing to my mother on the 12th of January 1811, thus relates what then took place :—

'I told you,' he says, 'that Sheridan was acting in 'his usual spirit of mischief. The Prince had referred 'it to Lord Grenville and me to draw up an answer to 'the two Houses. We had prepared one accordingly,* 'with some difficulty in reconciling our different 'opinions on the subject of restrictions. Lord Gren- 'ville, however, gave way as much as I thought 'necessary, and the answer, though it certainly needed 'correction, would, I think, with such corrections as 'might easily have been made, have done very well. 'I read it to the Prince on Thursday evening, saying 'I was at Holland's, ready to receive his commands if 'he wished for any alterations. Instead of taking this 'course he set to work with Sheridan and Adam, after

* At the end of the volume (App. II., p. 431 *et seq.*) will be found a copy of the answer as agreed upon between my father and Lord Grenville, and submitted by them to the Prince. Also of one proposed in the first instance by my father, but to which Lord Grenville could not agree, from the manner in which the proposed 'limitations' were mentioned; as well as of that drawn up by Mr. Sheridan, and finally adopted by the Prince.

'dinner, to examine it; and the former, after pulling 'it to pieces, paragraph by paragraph, finally per- 'suaded the Prince to reject it, and to substitute one 'of his own. They came to me with the information 'of this result at Holland's between eleven and twelve, 'and desired me to read the answer that had been 'agreed upon. I did so, saying that I should do 'nothing more; that as the Prince had rejected 'the answer which I had framed with Lord Grenville, 'I could not concur in framing another, and that my 'opinion of that proposed was, that it was, in its whole 'tenour and character, utterly objectionable.* I added 'that the Prince had certainly a right to adopt the 'answer which he approved most of, but that it must 'be understood that it was adopted without the con- 'currence of Lord Grenville and myself, and that we 'could not be responsible for it. Sheridan attempted 'some discussion, which I declined, seeing that he was 'pursuing it in a way which I thought extremely 'improper, and feeling that I could not very well 'command my temper. I therefore, after expressing 'these opinions, remained very silent, and showed what 'I hear he has represented, with less departure from 'truth than usual, a good deal of haughtiness and ill- 'humour. I afterwards remonstrated privately with

* Lord Lauderdale and Lord Holland who were also present when Mr. Sheridan read it, expressed, a similar opinion; as it appeared to show throughout an unbecoming soreness on the subject of the restrictions, and was, besides, expressed, in many places, in a very undignified manner. See letter from Lord Lauderdale to my father, Appendix II., p. 439 *et seq.*

'Adam on the impropriety of having the advice which 'Lord Grenville and I were called upon to give, sub- 'jected in this manner to the examination of an inferior 'Council, and stated that if such was to be the practice, 'I must decline giving any in future.' . . . 'I heard 'from Lauderdale that Sheridan afterwards resumed 'the discussion with Lord Holland, who expressed as 'strong an opinion upon the impropriety of the whole 'proceeding as possible. Yesterday morning I had a 'note from Adam, saying that he had been kept up 'till half-past three at Carlton House, and enclosing 'the answer which had been finally agreed upon. He 'called soon after, and we went to Camelford House, 'from whence Lord Grenville and I sent a short note, 'thanking the Prince for the communication of his 'intended answer, upon which we did not presume to 'offer any opinion, as it did not appear that he re- 'quired any of us.* We afterwards sent a long 'written Representation† on the treatment we had 'received, where the matter now rests.

'In the course of the transaction ——'s lying 'and baseness have been beyond all description.

* 'Lord Grey and Lord Grenville desire Mr. Adam to express on 'their part their dutiful acknowledgments to the Prince for the gracious 'communication of the answer which His Royal Highness intends 'making to the deputation from the two Houses this day. On the 'tenour of that answer it would be presumptuous in them to offer any 'opinion in a case where their advice is not required by His Royal 'Highness—January 11, 1811.

† See copy of this Representation at length, at the end of the volume (Appendix II., p. 436).

'Adam, on the contrary, has behaved as well as 'possible. Upon the whole I think it lucky that the 'thing has occurred, as it has given us in the outset an 'opportunity of meeting and repelling a danger to 'which we should have been continually liable. The 'answer you will see in the papers, with its puling 'phrases of "reverential delicacy," &c., in the style 'of a vulgar novel, but it is infinitely less objection-'able, bad as it still is, than in the way in which it 'first appeared.'

In the Representation to the Prince above referred to, my father and Lord Grenville protested firmly but respectfully against the course which had been pursued, of submitting the advice of those who had been commissioned by his Royal Highness to prepare his answer, to the judgment and decision of an 'inferior 'council,' and deprecated such a system as being opposed to those 'principles of constitutional respon-'sibility, the maintenance of which they deem essen-'tial to any hope of a successful administration of the 'public interests.'

The stand thus taken by my father and Lord Grenville against the interference of secret advisers, though it may very probably have influenced the Prince, to a certain degree, in his subsequent determination to continue the old Ministers in office, yet seems to have greatly alarmed him for the moment, and he called personally on Lord Holland the next day, and seemed, as Lord Holland wrote to Lord Grenville, 'anxious

'to do away any unpleasant feelings on the subject of 'the answer to the resolutions of the two Houses; and 'said he thought it best to have no more said on the 'subject. At the same time he observed, and autho- 'rised me and Adam to repeat to Lord Grey and 'you, that the misapprehension had arisen from the 'different views which he and you had taken of this 'stage of the proceeding: in which, according to his 'notions, you were not yet in a situation when his 'advisers would become strictly and constitutionally 'responsible, but which you had considered as placing 'you in that situation.'

Of this explanation my father said, that it was 'in 'fact acknowledging that he had no answer to give, 'and was, as anything would have been, short of 'defending the practice, sufficient for our satisfac- 'tion. What has happened will not, therefore, I 'think, be without its advantages.'

The difficulty which had thus arisen having been smoothed over, my father and Lord Grenville applied themselves to the consideration of the other questions which the Prince had at the same time put to them. First, with respect to the propriety, under the existing circumstances, of 'changing the Administration if a 'Regency should take place;' and, second, 'as to the 'means of forming a new one.'

The latter question was one which it was not found easy at once to answer in a manner satisfactory to all parties. In the course of the discussions upon it,

many difficulties were raised, particularly by Lord Grenville, which more than once threatened to compel them to declare their inability to form a Government.

On the 16th of January my father writes, that as he had objected to the course proposed by Lord Grenville, of seeking assistance from the ranks of their opponents, 'his (Lord Grenville's) present determination seems to be to say to the Prince that, not having it in our power to form an Administration which would have a fair prospect of permanency, we cannot undertake the Government, and consequently cannot, as far as depends on us, advise him to make any change. In this declaration I have told him I cannot agree, being satisfied that with our own strength, supported by the influence of the Government, there is a sufficient prospect of stability to impose it on us as a duty, not to shrink from the task that the Prince has proposed to us, and that, though I cannot undertake the Government without him (Lord Grenville), I feel it necessary to except myself from the opinion he has formed, and to declare that, if he had seen the matter in the same light that I do, I certainly would, however arduous the times may be, have undertaken the Administration.'

On the 18th he again writes: 'The night before last I found a sort of manifesto of fifteen pages from Lord Grenville. This must have led to an answer from me, which would perhaps have endangered our

'connection, but in the course of the day they took 'fright, desired to withdraw the paper, and everything 'seems now more likely to go on well; but still there 'are difficulties. In the midst of all this turmoil I 'continue quite well, and begin to feel that I am not, 'and ought not to be, afraid of any of them.'

All preliminary points were, however, at last satisfactorily arranged, and on the 21st of January my father and Lord Grenville returned an answer to the Prince's questions. In that answer they stated that if, after taking measures for procuring the most precise information that could be obtained, as to the state of the King's health, he (the Prince) 'was satis-'fied that the duties on which he was about to enter, 'must, in all human probability, be of such duration 'as to impose on his Royal Highness an absolute 'necessity of exercising his own judgment on the 'policy and measures of the Government which he 'was called to administer;' in that case, the opinion they had always expressed of the system pursued during the last four years, founded, as it was, 'on a 'full consideration of the state and interests of the 'country,' would lead them to advise 'an immediate 'and total change of public councils. Nor,' they added, 'would they decline to take upon themselves 'all the responsibility resulting from this opinion, if, 'upon full consideration, His Royal Highness should 'deem it expedient to carry this, their humble advice, 'into execution.' They further informed the Prince,

that having considered the means of forming a new Administration, 'they had concerted with each other 'such general outlines of the arrangements as they 'had found most practicable in the present divided 'state of parties, and under the very embarrassed 'state of public affairs,' and that they were prepared to enter, whenever required to do so, into the details of these arrangements.

On the same day they had a long interview with the Prince, of which my father writes, that 'it was satis-'factory in all respects;' and that, though they did not 'get the length of talking of particular arrange-'ments, all the preliminary points were completely 'agreed upon. Lord Grenville and I,' he adds, 'understand one another so well, that, with respect to 'our views, everything will go on smoothly; but I 'foresee other difficulties, particularly a long list from 'Carlton House, which may produce great embarrass-'ment.' The very next day showed that there was only too good reasons for entertaining this apprehension. 'The Prince' he writes, (22nd January,) 'is 'making an effort for Sheridan to go to Ireland as 'Secretary. To this it is impossible that we should 'agree. I foresee,' he repeats, on the 29th of January, 'so many difficulties with the Prince when we come 'to more close conference about arrangements, that I 'cannot see how they are to be got over. Sheridan 'they still fight for. If it were a mere question of 'giving him a place, however high, with large emolu-

'ments, nobody would be more ready to consent to it 'than I should be. But I really cannot make up my 'mind to sending a man with a lighted torch into a 'magazine of gunpowder. It would be impossible to 'prevent his communicating with the agitators of 'Ireland; and in the present disposition of that 'country, of which we receive daily more alarming 'accounts, who could look at the possible, or rather 'the probable, consequences of such communications 'without horror? If it were not for this, it certainly 'would be most desirable to get him out of the way; 'but, with such an apprehension on my mind, how 'could I hope for sleep or peace?'

It was, therefore, with something like a feeling of relief, that three days later—namely, on the 2nd of February—my father could announce the Prince's intention not to change his Ministers. While the discussions above referred to were going on, and while the Regency Bill was still under consideration in Parliament, confident reports were industriously circulated that 'the King was recovering.' And on the 28th of January my father wrote that he was 'persuaded, if the present reports of the King's 'improved state continue, that he (the Prince) will 'not dare to make any change in the Administration. 'This,' he adds, 'will not, as you know, be an unwel-'come event to me, if it happens by no fault of 'mine.'

On the 30th he mentioned the Prince having 'had

'a letter from the Queen, saying that Perceval had 'seen the King yesterday, and had laid before him 'the whole state of the business now pending in 'Parliament. The letter is evidently written in 'concert with Perceval, appears, indeed, to be of his 'dictation, and is evidently part of a plan to intimi-'date the Prince, by the expectation of the King's 'immediate recovery, from changing the Administra-'tion. So barefaced a plot, and so much of the same 'character as the proceedings of 1804, ought to have 'a directly contrary effect; but I *believe it will be suc-'cessful.*'

On the 1st of February, my father says, 'The 'King is certainly better; but no time can be fixed, 'even by the most sanguine of the physicians, for his 'recovery; nor are the hopes which they express such 'as to justify me in advising the continuance of 'Ministers of whom I think as I do of the present. 'But, as I have already said, I believe the Prince 'certainly will not remove them. To this I have, 'personally, no objection.' And on the 2nd, as already referred to, he announces the full confirmation of this expectation: the Prince 'having at last 'made up his mind not to change his Ministers. He 'cannot bear, he says, the idea of doing a thing 'which may have the effect of throwing the King into 'a new paroxysm, or of being thought to do so. This 'decision was communicated to Lord Grenville and 'me last night by Lord Hutchinson and Adam, and

'is to be communicated to us personally by the 'Prince to-morrow. It is, I confess, a great relief to 'me. I am now exempted from the difficulty and 'danger of taking any part in the Government; and 'by no fault of my own. What has passed,' he adds, 'has given me such an insight into the probable 'state of things under a new Government, that I 'much doubt whether any circumstances could ever 'induce me to take a share in it.'

In speaking, however, of the course pursued by the Prince, he took a very indulgent view of his conduct. 'His feelings and his fears,' he wrote, 'have been 'worked upon so powerfully, and so insidiously, 'particularly by our friend H——, who has proved 'himself a most consummate *politician* (I will not 'apply a harsher name), that his decision admits of 'much excuse. His situation was certainly an em- 'barrassing one; and if he had not nerves to over- 'come his difficulties by facing them at once, he is to 'be pitied rather than blamed. There can rest upon 'him no imputation of deceit or treachery; his 'wishes were to act otherwise; his dislike of the 'present Ministers is unaffected and strong; and 'everything he has done and said with respect to 'us, has been as kind as possible. After all, 'he has only relieved us from a situation of great 'difficulty and danger; and as I have neither to 'complain of him nor to reproach myself, I am 'better pleased with this event, regarding my own

'personal interest, than with any other that could 'have happened.'*

However unwillingly the Prince may, in the first instance, have been driven to continue a Tory Administration in office, he soon identified himself heartily with them; and the 'old, firm, and uniform adherent 'of Fox,' as he had delighted to boast himself in 1806, became, for the rest of his life, the equally staunch upholder of a system of Government, and of a policy, to which Mr. Fox had ever been diametrically opposed!

* Such, as regards my father, is the expression of 'disappointment 'and rage,' which, with that charity that distinguishes all his remarks when speaking of the Whigs, the Editor of Mr. Rose's Diaries attributes to 'the Opposition,' when the Prince 'determined to retain his 'father's Ministers in office.'—Diaries, &c., vol. ii., p. 447.

CHAPTER VI.

FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE REGENCY IN 1811, TO THE TERMINATION OF THE VARIOUS NEGOTIATIONS FOR A CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IN 1812.

THE Prince in parting with my father and Lord Grenville at this time, assured them of his unchanged sentiments, and of his determination, as soon as the restrictions on his power should expire, again to have recourse to their advice. But from the moment he had made up his mind to make no immediate change in the Government, my father foresaw that he would gradually become identified with the system and policy of the Ministers whom he thus retained in office, and expressed his fears to that effect in a letter to Lord Holland: 'Though,' he says, 'I see nothing to make us, 'as far as we are personally concerned, regret the 'Prince's decision, I fear that he will find himself in- 'volved in great embarrassments by it, particularly 'with respect to Ireland.'

The system to be pursued in Ireland was, in fact, the question on which the Ministers and the party with which the Prince had hitherto identified himself were most directly opposed to each other, and my father little foresaw the entire change in His Royal

Highness's opinions on this subject, which now commenced.

In spite of many reports to the contrary which reached him from London in the course of the year, my father still gave the Prince credit for those unchanged sentiments towards himself and Lord Grenville which he had professed in parting with them; and in the October following, when the language and conduct of Carlton House had created a very unfavourable impression amongst their friends as to the intentions of the Prince, he wrote strongly to deprecate the impatience that had been shown, and to counsel the propriety of 'remaining perfectly quiet,' and 'marking 'no distrust.' He could not but admit, indeed, that there was ground for such distrust; nor feel, he said, in writing to Lord Holland, much surprised that late events should make his friends impatient and violent; but for himself, he said at the same time, 'he had little 'doubt that the Prince really entertains the intention 'which he voluntarily professed both to Lord Gren- 'ville and me last winter.' 'Nor,' he adds, 'will any 'failure in the execution of such an intention make 'me think that it has not had a sincere existence. 'The same causes which have so long delayed its exe- 'cution, may finally prevent it altogether, or, what is 'more probable, lead to some such proposal as you 'hint at—of a coalition.'

'To such a proposal,' he again writes, when the belief had gained strength that, instead of the total change

of men and measures which had been looked for at the termination of the year of restrictions, an attempt would be made to bring about a coalition between some of the present Ministers and their opponents—'To such a proposal I should have little fear in giving 'as short an answer as I did two years ago;—though it might possibly, he thought, be prudent, with a view to taking such ground as the public would understand and approve, that the questions on which an insurmountable difference of opinion existed should be first brought forward. 'To coalitions,' he proceeds, 'where 'circumstances have occurred to render them useful 'to the public, and honourable to the parties concerned 'in them, I am, as you know, no enemy. I feel strongly 'and warmly in the moment of contest, but perhaps 'no man less cherishes permanent resentment, either 'political or personal, than I do. This good at least 'I must speak of myself. But to give to coalitions 'the character which I have assumed to be indispens-'able, and without which the mischief they do in 'lowering the character of public men, and giving 'currency to all the vulgar calumnies against them '(one of the greatest evils of the present time), is in-'calculable;—to give them this character, some pre-'vious agreement, or, at least, a marked approxima-'tion to agreement, in the great features of the policy 'to be followed at the time, must have taken place. 'Now nothing of this kind can be said to exist with 'respect to the present Ministers, as far as we can

'judge from their language and conduct;' and he adds that 'with Perceval, the only one with whom a 'coalition would be worth forming, it is certain that 'we agree in no one of the most material questions of 'the moment.' So completely, indeed, in his opinion, was any union with the existing Ministers out of the question, that in counselling forbearance to his friends, as already mentioned, he had stated that his own forbearance would not extend beyond the opening of the Session, if it should then be evident that no change of system was to be expected. 'We must then,' he said, 'be either in declared Opposition, or Ministers with 'the confidence of the Parliament and the Regent. 'The very fact of opening the Session, without any 'attempt at a change, will be of itself an unequivocal 'declaration of the Prince's intention to make none.' '. . . . In short,' he concludes, 'my motto is: For-'bearance to the last possible moment;—but when the 'period of hostilities arrives, vigorous and determined 'war.'

When, therefore, at the close of the year of restrictions, instead of giving effect to the intention voluntarily announced to my father and Lord Grenville in January 1811, of then making that change in the Government, which the supposed improvement in his father's health, and the limitations on his own power, had alone prevented on his assumption of the Regency, the Prince wrote to the Duke of York,* merely to

* See letters at the end of the volume, Appendix III., p. 441 *et seq.*

express the 'gratification he would feel if some of 'those persons with whom the early habits of his life 'were formed would strengthen his hands and form a 'part of his Government;' when he at the same time declared that he should be anxious, 'in the critical 'situation of the war in the Peninsula, to avoid any 'measure which might lead his allies to suppose that 'he meant to depart from the present system;' adding that 'he could not withhold his approbation from those 'who had honourably distinguished themselves in sup-'port of it;' and further stating that he had 'no pre-'dilections to indulge, no resentments to gratify, &c.' —When this appeal to his former friends only went the length of asking them to combine with the present Ministers, in forming a 'vigorous and united Adminis-'tration upon the most liberal basis;'—there could be but one answer;* and my father and Lord Grenville, in a formal reply drawn up by the latter, and communicated to the Duke of York at a personal interview, stated that the differences of opinion, which they described as 'embracing all the leading features of the

* See opinion of Sir Samuel Romilly, on the proposal made by Mr. Perceval, in 1809, quoted in a note to the last Chapter. He now says of this proposition through the Duke of York: 'He (the Regent) has 'proposed indeed a coalition with Mr. Perceval, a proposal which he 'knew must be rejected. The very proposal indeed imports that a total 'sacrifice of honour and character was a necessary qualification for en-'tering into the Prince's service. He says in his letter, that he has no 'predilections to indulge, and no resentments to gratify; a most dan-'gerous statement at the commencement of his reign considering his 'past conduct and his past professions. It will be understood to mean 'that there are no injuries he will not forgive, and no services he will 'not forget.

'present policy of the empire,' were 'too many and 'too important to admit of such an union.' The Duke of York, indeed, contended in the course of the interview that the intention of the Prince in making the communication through him had been misunderstood, and that it was by no means meant to imply, necessarily, a junction with the existing Government; but his explanation was not thought sufficient to induce any change in the answer, and it only remained, therefore, for the Duke to report to the Regent the utter failure of this appeal to his former friends. And may we not here ask, whether the Regent could fairly expect any other result from a step so very different from what he had led my father and Lord Grenville to expect he would take, as soon as he should find himself in possession of the full powers of the Sovereign? It seems indeed very questionable whether he desired any other result. Nor does it show any great lack of charity to suppose, that the offer, such as it was, was made rather to satisfy any scruples of conscience he might have felt at the abandonment of those 'with 'whom the early habits of his life were formed,' than with any expectation that it would be accepted. He might now flatter himself that he had shown his desire to continue the political connection which had so long existed, and, if this desire was not responded to, he, at least, was not to be blamed.

With respect to this overture, my father afterwards expressed his belief, in the debate which took place

after its failure, on Lord Boringdon's motion respecting the formation of an efficient Administration, that it had been made by the advice of Ministers. 'But did 'the noble lords opposite,' he asked—'they who were 'the advisers of the Regent on the occasion—who 'were his Ministers before, and had continued to be 'his Ministers since—did they expect that, in conse- 'quence of the Regent's letter, his noble friend and 'himself would have condescended to coalesce with 'them? Would they venture to deny that they were 'consulted on the letter? . . . . Suppose he and his 'friends had been in power, and had sent the noble 'lords opposite such a letter, would they have acceded 'to it?'

Amongst the subjects of difference with the present Ministers which made any junction between them and the Whig party impossible, the question of Ireland appeared to my father and Lord Grenville to be of the most immediate and vital importance. 'We are 'firmly persuaded,' they said, in their answer to the Duke of York, 'of the necessity of a total change in 'the present system of Government in that country, 'and of the immediate repeal of those civil disabilities 'under which so large a portion of His Majesty's sub- 'jects still labour on account of their religious opinions. 'To recommend to Parliament this repeal is the first 'advice which it should be our duty to offer to His 'Royal Highness. Nor could we, even for the 'shortest time, make ourselves responsible for any

'further delay in the proposal of a measure without 'which we could entertain no hope of rendering our 'services useful to His Royal Highness or to our 'country.' My father entered warmly, in the course of the interview with the Duke of York, into this subject, and alluded particularly to the Prince's former opinions upon the question, expressing his apprehension of the effect of the disappointment which would consequently follow if the Government which he might form should continue to act upon the principle of resisting the claims of the Catholics. This opinion he repeated in the debate which was raised on a motion by Lord Boringdon on this overture. 'A very 'general hope,' he said, 'was entertained that the 'Prince Regent was favourable to their claims, and 'that a new era would, by the course of nature, 'arrive, when bigotry and oppression should no longer 'oppose them. That new era had now arrived, but 'instead of its bringing to the Catholics a consum-'mation of their hopes, they saw the whole power of 'the Government embodied against them, under some 'cursed and baneful influence, and nothing remaining 'to them, but a prospect of perpetual exclusion from 'the benefits of the Constitution. . . . If the House 'believed the Irish to be a brave, a warm-hearted, a 'sanguine, a high-spirited people . . . the dangerous 'effect of such a disappointment would be formidable 'in the same proportion.'

It will be seen that this reference to the Prince's former opinions on this subject gave great offence.

Mr. Perceval's Government was now firmly established, with the full confidence and support of the Regent, but only for a few months. On the 12th of May 1812, it was brought to a violent termination by the hand of an assassin;* and as no one then contemplated the possibility of an Administration being formed out of the materials he had left behind him, which should defy all opposition and retain undisturbed possession of power for the next fourteen years, it was deemed necessary once more to have recourse to the parties in Opposition.

But even this acknowledged necessity could not now induce the Regent to call again upon those in whom, little more than a year before, he had professed to repose his entire confidence. They were not, indeed, to be openly cast off; but such propositions were to be made to them, through others, as could not, by possibility, lead to any result.

Lord Wellesley was, in the first instance, commissioned to form an Administration, to be constituted, if possible, from the ranks both of the Opposition and of the existing Government, of which the basis should be—

1st. That of taking into the early and serious consideration of the Executive Government, the state of the laws affecting the Roman Catholics, with a sincere

* However opposed to Mr. Perceval in his political opinions, my father did full justice to the public honesty and disinterestedness of that statesman, and seconded the Address from the House of Lords to the Regent on his atrocious murder, giving his cordial support to the provision proposed to be made for his family.

and earnest desire to bring that important question to a final and satisfactory settlement.

2nd. That of the prosecution of the war in the Peninsula with the best means of the country.

With this view, while Mr. Canning entered into communication with Lord Liverpool and other members of the Government, Lord Wellesley himself communicated directly with my father and Lord Grenville.

In their answer to a proposal made to them by Lord Wellesley on the 23rd of May, they admitted the 'duty of all public men, both by frank and conciliatory explanations of principle, and by the total abandonment of every personal object, to facilitate, as far as may be in their power, the means of giving effect to the late Resolution of the House of Commons.'* They assured Lord Wellesley of their readiness warmly to support any proposal made by any Minister for the immediate consideration of the Catholic claims, and expressed their concurrence in the wish to bring the war in the Peninsula to a successful termination; though on the latter point they added, that they thought the 'direction of military operations in an offensive war, and the more or less vigorous prosecution of those operations, are ques-

* Mr. Stuart Wortley (the late Lord Wharncliffe) had moved an Address to the Regent praying him to take steps for forming a 'strong and efficient Administration,' which had been carried against the Government by one hundred and seventy-four to one hundred and seventy.

'tions, not of principle, but of policy, to be regulated 'by circumstances in their nature temporary and fluc- 'tuating, by the engagements of the country, the 'prospects of ultimate success,' &c.

But while there appears to have been so far a general agreement between Lord Wellesley, my father, and Lord Grenville, as to the principles of the basis on which a new Government might be formed, difficulties arose in the course of Mr. Canning's negotiation with Lord Liverpool* and the members of the existing Administration which induced Lord Wellesley to declare, on the 27th of May, that his mission was at an end. And though this was immediately pronounced to be a mistake, and a renewed and more formal proposition was made by him on the 1st of June, it was with no better success. This second proposition was indeed utterly inadmissible. To the first, merely defining the principles on which it was hoped that a strong and comprehensive Administration

* Lord Liverpool's answer to the communication made to him by Mr. Canning, was, that he declined entering into any consideration of the proposed basis, as he and his colleagues felt themselves 'bound, 'particularly after what has recently passed, to decline the proposal of 'becoming members of an Administration to be formed by Lord Wel- 'lesley.' Some discussion appears to have gone on in the hope of inducing a change in this determination, but without effect. In announcing the final failure of his attempt to form an Administration, Lord Wellesley ascribed it to the existence of the 'most dreadful per- 'sonal animosities,' &c.; and in answer to the storm of disclaimers of having been actuated by such motives, which was brought upon him from all sides—from my father and Lord Grenville, as well as from Lord Moira, on the part of the Prince to whom the expression had been very generally applied—he referred to Lord Liverpool's answer to Mr. Canning, as an ample justification of what he had said.

might be formed, my father and Lord Grenville had shown themselves, as proved by the answer quoted above, not indisposed to listen. But the second, in which the members to be brought by each party into the Cabinet were already defined, being based, as it appeared to them, upon a 'new and objectionable princi-'ple,' tending 'to establish within the Cabinet itself a 'system of counteraction, inconsistent with the prose-'cution of any uniform and beneficial course of policy,' was at once rejected by them.* In fact, the radical objection to the whole proposal was one that could scarcely be removed, namely, that it was sought to unite men in Government, who up to that very moment had been, and indeed still were, opposed to each other on all the 'leading features of the policy of the empire,' and from whose junction in the same Administration, no good could be expected, sufficient to counterbalance the bad effect of the shock which public opinion could not fail to receive from such a union.

'When an union could be honourable,'—my father had already said in the House of Lords in the Debate on the proposal made, as already related, through the Duke of York—'when an union could be honourable

* See letter from Lord Wellesley, with the answer from my father and Lord Grenville, in Appendix IV., p. 454 *et seq.*

An interesting account of the circumstances under which Lord Wellesley resigned office in January, 1812, and of the part he took in the subsequent negotiations for the formation of a more efficient Administration, will be found in a Memoir written by Colonel Meyrick Shawe, in 1814, and published in the seventh supplementary volume of the Duke of Wellington's Despatches.

'and advantageous to the nation, he would ever be 'ready to unite. But character was as much the 'strength of men, as it was that of a nation, and he 'could conceive nothing more dangerous than to shock 'the public opinion, by an appearance of sacrificing 'principle for the sake of attaining office and emolu-'ment.' . . . 'They had heard,' he added, 'of broad and 'narrow Administrations; and the Noble and Learned 'Lord on the Woolsack (Lord Eldon) had observed 'that nothing was so mischievous as a broad-bottomed 'Administration. With this character he was dis-'posed to concur, if the Noble Lord meant such a broad 'and liberal basis, as should comprehend persons of 'the most discordant opinions; who, for the sake of 'coalition, must either sacrifice their own interest, or 'carry dissensions into the Cabinet.' It was only to be expected, therefore, that any attempt to form an Administration on the principle proposed through Lord Wellesley, would fail, and the commission with which he had been intrusted for that purpose was finally declared on the 3rd of June, to be at an end.

Had the Prince's feelings towards my father and Lord Grenville remained the same as he had professed in the spring of 1811—had his opinions on questions of public policy been the same as he had then avowed—a plain and simple course was before him; namely, to call upon my father and Lord Grenville to carry into effect the arrangements for forming a new Administration with which they had been pre-

pared, with his own assent and concurrence, at the time that he first assumed the Regency. This course, too, had been pointed out by my father, in answer to a letter which he received on the 3rd June from Lord Moira, who, during all these transactions, was in constant and confidential communication with the Prince. Lord Moira had written to explain his own conduct and that of the Prince after the termination of Lord Wellesley's commission; and the next day wrote a second letter suggesting a conference for the purpose of considering the means of forming a strong Administration. 'It is my deliberate convic-'tion,' my father writes, in answer, 'that till the Prince 'shall see, that to render our services useful to himself, 'it is necessary that he should give us full powers in 'making the arrangements in every part of the Govern-'ment, in the same manner as he professed to do in 'the spring of 1811, and as he promised to do when-'ever the restrictions on his authority should cease; 'in short, till he is prepared to give us his full confi-'dence both as to men and measures, it certainly is 'not desirable for us, and perhaps not for him, that 'we should be called to his councils.

'I am afraid there is no chance of such a disposition 'as this on the part of the Prince; and when you ask 'me whether a private conference between us might 'enable you to put matters in such a train as would 'be likely to produce a useful result, all I can say 'is, that if it could lead to our being called by the

'Prince to form an Administration comprehending the 'persons with whom we have been in communication, 'founded on the principles which have already been 'stated, and with full assurance of support in carrying 'other important measures which have not yet been 'talked of, but upon which, I am confident, there 'would be no disagreement between you and me; 'everything in the formation of that Administration, 'in all its branches, being left open to fair considera-'tion and decision;—if such a result should be 'probable, I would go to the conference which you 'suggest with the greatest readiness, and with a 'sincere hope that its effect might be such as we 'desire. But if this prospect is not afforded me, I 'should despair of success.

'In a disposition to conciliate I trust you will not 'suppose me to be wanting. But after what has 'passed, I could not venture to undertake any share, 'however unimportant, in the dangerous task of 'Government, without the full security of its being 'composed of persons on whose support and co-opera-'tion I could depend in all its departments, and the 'strongest evidence to the public, both in the principle 'and the details of its formation, that it was so.'*

But the course pointed out by my father was one which, if in the power of the Regent, it was no longer

* Letter to Lord Moira, June 4, 1812. It certainly seems extraordinary that Lord Moira, with this letter before him, should expect only two days afterwards acquiescence in his condition not to change the Household!

his wish to adopt. It was not only that he had gradually become identified, as my father had foreseen he would, during the year which had since elapsed, with the policy and system of his present advisers, and had become in the same degree estranged from his former friends; but in the course of the discussions in Parliament that followed the negotiation attempted through the Duke of York, grave cause of offence had been found.

My father, in the course of the explanations which then took place, had alluded, as has been already mentioned, to the former supposed opinions of the Prince on the Catholic Question. This seems to have been ill taken; and Lord Moira, while the result of Lord Wellesley's commission was still uncertain, had written (on the 31st of May) to ask an explanation of what he had then said. 'It is difficult,' my father writes in reply, 'to remember precise expressions so long 'after they were spoken, but I cannot be far wrong 'in stating the substance of what I said as follows:— 'I was speaking on the subject of the Irish Catholics, 'and particularly on the charge of intemperate con- 'duct which had been urged against them. I stated 'that great allowances were to be made for this, con- 'sidering their repeated disappointments, and I cited 'as instances of these, the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam,*

* In 1795, by Mr. Pitt's Government. He had been appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland after the split in the Whig party, occasioned by the difference of opinion on the policy rendered necessary by the French Revolution.

'and the Union. I then said that the most distinct 'and authentic pledges had been given to them of the 'Prince's wish to relieve them from the disabilities 'of which they complained ;* that I spoke in the 'hearing of persons who could contradict me if what 'I said was unfounded, and who would, I was sure, 'support its truth, if questioned ; that now, when the 'fulfilment of these pledges was confidently expected, 'to see an Administration confirmed in power which 'stood on the express principle of resisting their 'claims, was, perhaps, the bitterest disappointment 'they had yet experienced ; and that it was not sur-'prising, if, under such circumstances, they felt and 'acted in a way that all well-wishers to the peace of 'the empire must regret.

'This I give as the substance, and by no means as 'a correct repetition of the particular expressions used 'by me ; and this statement I can neither retract nor 'endeavour to explain away. If, in consequence of it,

* In a debate which subsequently took place in the House of Commons on the Catholic Claims, Mr. Ponsonby was called up by some assertion of Lord Castlereagh on this subject, and stated, 'I say that 'the noble Duke (Bedford) lately at the head of the Irish Government 'and myself, did receive commands, not merely permission, but the 'actual commands of the illustrious personage alluded to, to make the 'communication that such were the intentions of that great personage 'in respect to the Roman Catholics of Ireland, and that he would never 'forsake their interests.' This statement it was impossible to deny, and it could only be met by pleading that 'it was unconstitutional to 'make allusions to the conduct and opinions of His Royal Highness the 'Prince of Wales, previous to his accession to the regency, with a view 'of calling in question the conduct he might have subsequently thought 'it right to adopt.'

'the Prince feels a strong personal objection to 'me, I can only repeat what I have already said 'to you, that I am perfectly ready to stand out of 'the way; that my friends shall have my complete 'concurrence in taking office without me, and my 'most cordial support in the Government, if their 'measures are directed, as I am sure they always 'must be, by the principles on which we have acted 'together.'

This answer was considered satisfactory by Lord Moira (whatever it may have been by his master), and he congratulates himself, in acknowledging its receipt, on having thus 'removed preliminary obstacles from a 'negotiation in which the dearest interests of the 'country were at stake.'

But in the same speech in which he had made these allusions to the Prince's former opinions on the Catholic Question, my father had referred to another point, on which, though no explanation seems to have been asked for, it appears still more probable that lasting offence must have been taken. He had denounced in strong terms 'the existence of an unseen 'and separate influence,' (he also called it 'a cursed and 'baneful influence,) which lurked behind the throne,' an influence to which he could alone ascribe the letter of January 1812 to the Duke of York, should Ministers deny having advised it. 'Would they (the 'Ministers) deny,' he had also asked in the House, 'that 'they were consulted on the letter? If so, it would

'establish the point that there was an influence behind 'the throne, the most dangerous that could exist.' And he had declared it to be his 'rooted and unalter- 'able principle not to accept of office without coming 'to an understanding for the abolition of this destruc- 'tive system.'

In this determination, further strengthened as it was by the course adopted by the Regent in the subsequent negotiations, so directly at variance with the professions he had made in 1811, we have the explanation and the justification of the stand taken on the subject of the Household appointments, on which the fresh negotiations opened by Lord Moira, upon the final failure of Lord Wellesley's attempt to form an Administration, at once broke off.

That negotiation commenced on the 5th of June by a request from Lord Moira to my father and Lord Grenville that they would confer with him, in the hope that it might lead to the possibility of 'co-operation in 'the Prince's service.' 'No advantage, however,' they thought, 'was likely to result from pursuing this 'subject by unauthorized discussions,' and the conference was declined. It was therefore necessary for Lord Moira to procure direct authority from the Regent to apply to my father and Lord Grenville, or to discontinue the negotiation.

This authority he received, and on the 6th the possibility and means of forming an Administration were discussed between them in a conversation, of

which a minute was afterwards drawn up and read in both Houses.*

The explanations respecting measures which appeared 'to be of the greatest urgency at the present 'moment,' were declared to be satisfactory. But as Lord Moira refused to acquiesce in the demand of my father and Lord Grenville that the 'appointments to those great offices of the Household which 'have been usually included in the political arrangements made on a change of Administration,' should be considered in the same manner on the present occasion, the negotiation was at once terminated; and on the 8th of July, Lord Liverpool in the House of Lords, and Lord Castlereagh in the House of Commons, announced that the Prince Regent had named the former nobleman First Lord of the Treasury, and intrusted him with the task of forming a new Administration.

In the explanations which ensued in both Houses, my father and Lord Grenville were violently attacked for having acted, as it was said, 'on a settled design 'of humiliating the Prince Regent, and of irritating 'his feelings.' This my father indignantly denied. Both he and Lord Grenville emphatically stating that in making the demand above alluded to, they 'acted 'on public grounds alone, and with no other feeling 'whatever, than that which arose from the necessity of 'giving to a new Government that character of effi-

* See Minute in Appendix V., p. 458, at the end of the volume..

'ciency and stability, and those marks of the consti-
'tutional support of the Crown, which were required
'to enable it to act usefully for the public service;
'and that on those grounds it appeared to them indis-
'pensable that the connection of the great offices of
'the Court with the political Administration should be
'clearly established in its first arrangement.'

This principle is now so generally admitted, and extends so much further than it was then sought to apply it—embracing as it now does, not only the great offices, but every situation in the Household held by members of either House of Parliament—that one can scarcely understand its having, at this time, been even brought into question. Sir Robert Peel carried the principle so far as to make the non-dismissal even of the wives of the former Ministers, the ground for refusing to take office in 1840.

My father also repelled the accusation that when they insisted upon the preliminary condition of the power to dismiss the Household, they must have known that the principal members of it had already declared their intention to resign. This had been said by Lord Yarmouth, who stated in the House of Commons, for himself and other members of the Household, that they had had this intention, and had taken every means of making it known, communicating it in particular 'to a right honourable gentleman who 'had taken an active part in the negotiations.' Mr. Ponsonby declared that whoever this right honourable gen-

tleman might be, 'he could state with certainty that 'nothing of the import of what had fallen from the 'noble lord had been ever stated to himself or to my 'Lords Grey or Grenville.' And Mr. Tierney added, that on applying to Mr. Sheridan, in consequence of the reports that were spread of intended resignations, he was met by the offer of a bet of five hundred guineas that 'no such thing was ever in contemplation.' Mr. Sheridan, in a shuffling explanation, interrupted once by illness, and which branched off into every irrelevant topic, could not deny either the conversation with Lord Yarmouth, or the bet to which Mr. Tierney alluded. The latter, however, he said, referred only to the 'contingency on which the resignations were to 'depend.' And as to the former—the communication alluded to by Lord Yarmouth—that nobleman 'knew 'that he was one of the last persons to whom the 'authority for making such a communication would 'have been given. The noble lord knew that he was 'not in the habit of having political communications 'with Lord Grey, much less with Lord Grenville. A 'message of that sort he would not take, &c. &c." My father declared at the same time, in the House of Lords,' that he had never heard of the intended resignation of the 'Household from anything in 'the shape of authority, and the very loose rumour 'he did hear was immediately contradicted.' Nothing,' he added, 'could be further from his wishes or 'intentions than to do anything that could be

'offensive to the Prince. They required only the 'changes that had been usual upon a general change 'of Government. If they could have believed the 'resignations to be about to take place, they would 'have been perfectly satisfied, and would have ac- 'cepted the arrangement in the manner most agreeable 'to the Prince, and to the feelings of the individuals 'concerned in it.'

But there was one condition without which, neither on this nor on any other occasion, could my father be induced to accept the situation of a Minister responsible for the policy of the country; and that was, the assurance of having the constitutional support of the Crown in bringing forward the measures which he considered that the interests of the country required. 'For myself, my Lords,' he said, 'I will never become 'one of any Government, unless I have complete 'assurance and security that the principles I have 'professed shall be fully and fairly discussed, and the 'measures which I consider absolutely necessary for 'the salvation of the country, adopted; and with these 'sentiments I have now little prospect of being called 'to the councils of my Sovereign.'

And had the late negotiations been of a nature to give him reason to hope that if he accepted office such would be his position in the Government? or had the propositions made to him been such in themselves, or had they been introduced in a manner, to encourage such a hope? A short recapitulation of the various

stages of these negotiations, which I must make at the risk of appearing tedious, will show how far this was from being the case.

While the discussions on the Regency Bill were still in progress, the Prince had openly declared his intention of intrusting my father and Lord Grenville with the formation of an Administration; and he had discussed with them the general arrangements which they had agreed in proposing, in a manner that my father spoke of as entirely satisfactory.*

When this intention was abandoned for the moment, under the pressure put upon him on the ground of the then state of the King's health, the Prince had volunteered to my father the assurance that as soon as the restrictions, which had been imposed upon him for a year, should expire, he would again recur to their advice. But when this period arrived, what had been the conduct of the Regent? Without the occurrence of a single event to merit the forfeiture of the confidence which he had professed to repose in them, and in direct contradiction to the assurance thus voluntarily given to them, my father and Lord Grenville found themselves merely invited to consider the possibility of forming a junction with the existing Administration.

Nor even on the death of Mr. Perceval, when a fresh attempt to strengthen the Government was, as

* See extract from a letter to my mother of the 21st January 1811, quoted in the last Chapter.

it were, forced upon the Prince, had he thought proper to make a direct appeal to his former chosen counsellors. The negotiations for forming a new Government were, in the first instance, committed to Lord Wellesley* and Mr. Canning, whose employment on such a mission by the Regent had been characterized by my father as far back as the preceding August (when a report of their being so commissioned already prevailed) as 'inconsistent with the communications 'he (the Prince) entered into with Grenville and me 'last spring, or with the language and professions 'which he thought proper to use when he parted with 'us.'† 'How stood,'—my father said, in the course of the explanations that took place on the 8th of June,— 'How stood our affairs at the commencement? Can 'I forget that I received authority to form an Administration, but that His Majesty's Government was 'continued by His Royal Highness from the most 'amiable motives—the hope of the recovery of the 'King. But at the same time we received assurances 'that if his Royal Father should not be restored, and 'the Prince should assume the reins of Government, 'he would act upon those principles he had formerly 'entertained, and that the commission with which I 'had at first been intrusted, should be renewed.

* I have not thought it necessary to enter into the details of the second proposition made by Lord Wellesley. The Minute and Answer in the Appendix sufficiently show the nature of that proposal, which was one that no one attempted for an instant to say ought to have been accepted.

† Letter to Lord Holland, August 4, 1811.

'Conscious of nothing that should induce His Royal 'Highness to recall his gracious purpose, we did en- 'tertain hopes of being indulged with the confidence 'of our Sovereign. We were disappointed; yet to the 'first proposition made by the Noble Marquis (Welles- 'ley), confessedly without authority, we returned an 'answer which showed our disposition to conciliate, 'in compliance with the general wish of the nation.'*

Lord Wellesley's mission failing, and a more direct communication with the Opposition leaders becoming unavoidable, the Regent did not even then take the simple and direct, as well as the customary, course, of sending for those who were to be at the head of the Administration, and giving them full powers for its formation (a course which only a few days before my father had intimated to Lord Moira was the only one likely, as far as he and Lord Grenville were concerned, to be attended with success*); but a third person was again employed. Their acceptance of office was to be a subject of negotiation; and in the course of that negotiation, on asking the preliminary question—a question which the course of these transactions made it, in their opinion, more than ever imperative upon them to put—as to the extent to which they were to possess the powers with regard to the Household appointments, usually granted to those charged with the formation of a new Ministry, and the possession of which was supposed to mark more particularly the

* See extract already quoted from letters to Lord Moira of 4th June.

confidence of the Sovereign. On asking this, under existing circumstances, most important question, they were told that they were indeed to possess all these powers, but with the understanding that they should not be exercised!*

Believing, as my father did, in the existence of a secret influence—an influence which had first prompted the offer made to them through the Duke of York, and had afterwards stood in the way of that direct appeal to himself and Lord Grenville which they had a right to expect,—believing in the existence of such an influence, which would probably now be exerted to thwart him in pursuing that policy to forward which could be his only object in joining the Administration, was it possible for him to acquiesce in such a condition? Had not past occurrences given him a right to be more than usually on his guard? And had not the circumstances attending the different proposals made

* Mr. Canning, in defending Lord Moira for his conduct on this occasion, said, he merely 'resisted the application of a power which he 'acknowledged to exist;' but he fixes on that nobleman all the responsibility of having prevented the formation of a new Administration, when in relating what occurred on the termination of Lord Moira's conversation with my father and Lord Grenville, he proceeds to state upon authority, that when 'he (Lord Moira) returned to the Royal presence 'he put this question directly: "Is your Royal Highness prepared, if I 'should so advise it, to part with all the officers of your household?" 'The answer was, "I am." "Then," said Lord Moira, "your Royal 'Highness shall not part with one of them."'

Lord Moira laid himself open to much suspicion, as to the motives on which he had acted on this occasion, by accepting the appointment of Governor-General of India from Lord Liverpool, only a few months later. 'I pretend to no chivalry,' my father writes on that occasion to Lord Holland, 'but I would rather rot and die in gaol than act as 'Moira has done.'

to him, amply justified him in expressing, in the House of Lords, the suspicion—'either that we were not to be 'admitted to the Cabinet at all, or that we were to be 'bound down in such a manner, that the public should 'have security that the principles and measures to 'which, during our whole Parliamentary existence, 'we have been pledged, should be decidedly over-'ruled. The same suspicion,' he continued, 'occurred 'to my noble friend near me, Lord Grenville. Was 'this, I appeal to the House, a fit, a decent proposal 'for us to accept? What is there in my conduct— 'what is there in my life—which should induce even a 'momentary belief that I would consent to degrade 'myself into an instrument—a tool, to accomplish the 'designs of others? Was it really believed that I 'would now support measures I have strenuously and 'uniformly condemned? Shall I permit myself for an 'instant to indulge the idea, that any man could dare 'to hope, that for the despicable emoluments of office 'I would barter the principles that have actuated 'my life; or that I would now abandon the measures 'which, in my opinion, are essential to the salvation 'of the State?'

In contending, therefore, for the recognition of the power to make such changes in the Household as they might deem requisite, my father and Lord Grenville were only contending, as they believed, for the power, without which they could not honourably accept office, of carrying into effect the policy to which they were

pledged.* Nor did they do this in any principle of exclusion. They had shown in their answers to Lord Wellesley that they were not only willing to act with any men who agreed with them on the general principles of the policy to be adopted, but that they were also ready to waive the claim which they undoubtedly had upon the Regent, to be themselves at the head of any new arrangement.† But this simple and constitutional view of the case was studiously kept out of sight. A cry was raised of a design to humiliate the Regent. This pretence was eagerly seized upon

* Lord Moira in his explanation, treated the matter as a mere 'point 'of form,' which he considered it improper to press, and a 'pretension,' the consequences of yielding to which 'would have been singularly 'mischievous.' Lord Grenville replied, 'that it was not on a *pretension*, 'as the noble Earl terms it, but on a difference regarding a most im- 'portant point of the Constitution, necessary as we conceive to the 'good government of the empire that our dissension was founded. . . 'The question was no less than this—whether we could consent to 'become efficient members of an Administration formed on a principle 'which, in our deliberate opinion, was calculated to overthrow the ac- 'knowledged practice of the Constitution.' It is difficult to understand on what ground or principle Mr. Canning spoke of the 'wish of the 'noble lords to have the whole power of the Government put into their 'hands,' as the condition of their acceptance of office, as an 'undue pre- 'tension' on their part.

† See page 287.—Colonel Meyrick Shawe, in a memoir published in the seventh supplementary volume of the Duke of Wellington's Despatches, shows that Lord Wellesley recognized this obligation on the part of the Prince Regent, and advised him to act upon it. He was consulted, apparently by the Prince, as to the Government he should form at the close of the year of restriction. In answer, Lord Wellesley said, 'It is generally credited that your Royal Highness is pledged to a 'particular set of men. It is of great importance to the country and 'to yourself that your Government (in your own name) should com- 'mence with unblemished honour. My advice therefore is, *that you* 'do not leave your honourable pledges unredeemed, cost what it may.'

in an unreformed and subservient House of Commons; and the same Ministers, who, when a change of Government seemed imminent, were condemned, by the deliberate vote of the House, as unequal to the exigencies of the times, were, now that they appeared to be confirmed in power, assured of the confidence and support of the same House by a majority of one hundred and twenty-five!

I must not conclude my notice of these negotiations without mentioning that there was considerable difference of opinion amongst the members of the Whig party themselves, as to the course pursued by my father and Lord Grenville in refusing the Government on the conditions offered. Many of their friends, indeed, condemned their conduct very strongly. 'Whitbread,' my father wrote to Lord Holland, 'is 'against us on the subject of the Household. He says 'the point of honour was saved by Moira's stating 'that we had power to change the officers in that 'department, and that . . . we ought not to have 'insisted on the exercise of the power;' and Mr. Horner writes to Mr. Hallam: 'I regret very much 'that you are not satisfied with the conduct of Lord 'Grey and Lord Grenville in their rupture of the 'negotiation.' Mr. Horner himself took what seems to me a very just view of what occurred. 'Their 'mode of closing the negotiation was'—he gives it as his opinion,—'the most honourable and upright for 'themselves, though with a little more reserve they

'might have left it to be terminated with more dis-
'grace to the Prince. . . I am now satisfied,' he adds,
'looking back to the whole intrigue, that they never
'had any chance of coming into office; and am some-
'what inclined to apprehend that the high tone of
'personal honour, and the strict stoical maxims of
'political conduct, which the present leaders of the
'Whig Opposition are guided by, . . . are not
'calculated to obtain place for them, except in a
'favourable conjuncture of accidents, or to win imme-
'diate favour for them with the public. . . I will not
'say that nothing of the peculiarities of temper was to
'be detected in their prompt and peremptory manner
'of negotiating; but, on the other hand, they negotiated
'with all the odds against them, arising from their
'integrity and rigid honour being known to those who
'intrigued against them with fewer scruples.' And
again, in speaking of the difficulties they would have
had to contend against in office, he says: 'From all
'this they are saved. Not by any want of courage
'on their side, but by the triumph of inveterate
'duplicity, and the low arts of a palace over an
'inflexible and proud integrity. I believe the gene-
'ral opinion to be at present against the Whigs; and,
'with the usual sagacity of the public, they see
'nothing but a struggle for a few places in the deter-
'mination not to accept office without power.'

Such were the efforts made by a Prince who had claimed for himself, only a few years before, the title

of one of the 'old, firm, and uniform adherents of 'Fox,' to introduce into his Government the advocates and representatives of the principles which it had been his own boast to have learnt from that great man! And from this time, to the end of his life, his estrangement and separation from his 'early friends' were final and complete.

Of the two questions which had been put forward by Lord Wellesley in his attempt at the formation of a Government, as those an agreement on which might form the basis of a negotiation—I need not add a word to what I have already said in explanation of my father's views respecting the claims of the Catholics. His opinions on that question never varied till its final settlement in 1829. But shortly after the termination of all the negotiations for a change of Administration above mentioned, a vote was come to by the House of Commons which might well provoke the contrast which he drew between the course the House seemed now disposed to adopt, and the circumstances under which it had been elected in 1807. On the 22nd of June Mr. Canning moved, and carried by a majority of 129, a resolution pledging the House to an early consideration, in the next Session, of the Roman Catholic claims, with a view to their 'final 'and conciliatory adjustment.'* And the next day,

* The numbers were :—

For Mr. Canning's Resolution	235
Against it	106
Majority	129

when Lord Wellesley gave notice of his intention to make a similar motion in the House of Lords, my father thus alluded to the vote of the preceding night in the other House.

'Yesterday,' he said, 'it was exactly five years 'since this Parliament met, after the dismission of an 'Administration for bringing forward an inadequate* 'measure in favour of the Catholics. He said inade- 'quate, because he felt it to be so, but was at the same 'time satisfied that more could not have been carried 'at that period. It would be recollected under what 'circumstances this Parliament was assembled. A 'cry was sent forth through the country against the 'dismissed Administration, upon the members of which 'every species of obloquy was cast, for the effort which 'they had made towards the conciliation of His Ma- 'jesty's Roman Catholic subjects. Yet he now had 'the satisfaction to witness, and he congratulated him- 'self and the country upon the event, that in this very 'Parliament, the House of Commons had agreed to a 'proposition, the object of which was the complete 'conciliation of His Majesty's Roman Catholic sub- 'jects, and that proposition brought forward by one 'who was a member of the Administration under 'whose auspices this Parliament was assembled. This

* Not *because* the measure was inadequate, as the manner in which his words are reported would seem to imply, but, because any concession to the Roman Catholics, however slight, was objected to. Nothing can generally be more unsatisfactory than the reports of the Parliamentary debates at that time, unless, which my father never did, the speakers sent corrected reports of their own speeches.

'would teach him still more forcibly to persevere in 'the line of duty, whatever obloquy might be cast 'upon him, satisfied that, sooner or later, his motives 'would be justified to the public, and his conduct 'shown in its true and proper light.'

Lord Wellesley's motion was only rejected by a majority of one; and such a division in the House of Lords, which had always been considered to be the stronghold of the anti-Catholics, following the decisive majority by which the principle of conciliation had been affirmed in a House of Commons chosen under all the excitement of a 'No Popery' cry, might well encourage a hope on the part of the Catholics, that the success of their cause was not far distant.

But an expedient had been for some years adopted with respect to this question, infinitely more fatal to its success, and better calculated to defeat the hopes of its advocates, than any direct opposition could have proved; that, namely, of making it what is called an open one. The effect of adopting this principle has simply been to exempt the Government, upon this the most important question that could be brought under their consideration, from the necessity of declaring, as a Government, any policy whatever, and thus to save the Minister at its head from the usual consequences of a vote adverse to his views. Indeed it would seem as if this expedient had been expressly hit upon, as a means of satisfying the consciences of those who professed to be in favour of the policy of concession, yet

who were not prepared to sacrifice office to the advocacy of that policy. And though the Cabinet Ministers were on this occasion, and continued to be throughout Lord Liverpool's Administration, pretty equally divided in both Houses on the subject of the Catholic claims, the only result of their balanced opinions was the long disappointment of every hope which the present favourable demonstration in both Houses might have tended to encourage. Seventeen years were yet to elapse—seventeen years of miserable and mischievous, yet, considering all things, of perhaps not inexcusable agitation—ere the concessions which could not be obtained from the justice were wrung from the fears of a British Parliament.

And am I not right in attributing this unhappy consequence rather to the professed friends than to the avowed opponents of the Roman Catholic claims? Can any one doubt that if Mr. Canning, Lord Castlereagh, and others who acquiesced, as members of Government, in making this an open question, though acknowledging the importance of settling it in the only way in which it could be settled, had followed the example of my father and Lord Grenville in making that settlement a sine quâ non condition of their acceptance of office, it would have been utterly impossible for either Mr. Perceval or Lord Liverpool to have formed Administrations which did not admit the principle of concession to the Catholics? Nor, at the commencement of the Regency, did the difficulty which had been

hitherto interposed by the personal objections of the Sovereign any longer exist. George III. in 1812 was helplessly insane, and admitted to be so; and the Regent was still supposed to be favourable to a cause which he had hitherto avowedly supported.

The vigorous prosecution of the war in the Peninsula was the second question proposed by Lord Wellesley, on which agreement was necessary before negotiations could be entered into for a new Administration; and to this I must advert at some length, for on no subject have the opinions of my father been more grossly or more systematically misrepresented. In fact the systematic misrepresentation of the opinions and sentiments expressed by their opponents was one of the most effectual weapons used by Ministers and their supporters to defend themselves from attack. My father had more than once complained of this, and now, in the course of the explanations arising out of the late political negotiations, he said: 'He was well 'aware that he had little chance of escaping considerable misrepresentation, for he knew from experience 'that, say what he would, he could not exempt himself from having, in the course of a few days, and 'frequently in the course of a few hours, sentiments 'imputed to him directly opposite to those which he 'actually delivered.'

It has been seen that no one had hailed with more eager hope and sympathy the first rising of the Spaniards against their French invaders; that he had

entirely approved of the policy of supporting them with the best means of the country; and, when negotiations with France were subsequently spoken of, that he had declared his opinion that no greater infamy could attach to any country, than would attach to England, if she consented even to treat upon the condition of abandoning Spain to the French usurpation.

But he had never contemplated our making ourselves principals in the contest. We should give the Spaniards, indeed, our best assistance, and that with no niggard hand, both as to men and money. But it was for them to work out their own deliverance. And the result of Sir John Moore's campaign, proving how little dependence could be placed in Spanish promises, or on Spanish exertion, had led him to question the policy of continuing the war in the Peninsula at such an expenditure of the resources of the country as it seemed likely to entail upon us.

This opinion had been further strengthened by the issue of the Talavera campaign, when faith in Spanish assurances had again nearly led to fatal results; and even after Lord Wellington's great successes in 1811 and 1812 had given a brighter aspect to our affairs in the Peninsula, my father felt his hopes much damped by the disgust with which the conduct of the Spanish Provisional Government continued to inspire him, and which he feared was 'preparing for us new disappoint-'ments.'

Having this opinion of the Spaniards, and an almost

equal distrust of the Portuguese Government, it is not surprising that when, at the close of 1810, Lord Wellington had been forced to retire upon Lisbon, and when he saw the whole of Spain overrun and occupied by an overpowering French force (amounting at that time to near 400,000 men), he should have doubted the possibility of the 30,000 or 40,000 British troops who held the lines before Lisbon, being enabled long to maintain their ground against well-directed efforts on the part of the French, or that he should express his fear lest it should prove impracticable to withdraw our army, without 'either a convention, or the certain 'loss of a considerable portion of it.'

He could not believe that Napoleon, departing from the principle to which much of his great success had hitherto been owing, of finishing one war before engaging in another, would now embark in so insane a project as that of the invasion of Russia, leaving behind him, as an open sore, calculated of itself to exhaust the resources of his empire, a war in Spain which, so far from promising a speedy conclusion, was daily gathering fresh intensity, and a wider sphere of importance, as it proceeded.

So strong was this opinion, that even in the month of August 1811, when Portugal had been finally evacuated by the French, and our prospects of ultimate success had assumed a much brighter appearance, he expressed in writing to Lord Holland his disbelief in the rumoured 'war in the north, as he could not

'think this a likely moment for Bonaparte to choose 'for pushing any demands that might provoke resist-'ance;' and he anticipated, on the contrary, a great effort on his part, to retrieve the failure of the preceding year in the Peninsula.

On these grounds alone my father had, at the close of 1810 and the beginning of 1811, expressed his doubts as to the prudence of continuing the war in the mode or on the scale on which we had hitherto conducted it. But even when things were at their worst, he wrote to Lord Holland that, 'On the im-'portance of defending Spain, if it can be done, 'nobody can hold a stronger opinion than I do. I 'was most sanguine in my hopes in the beginning, 'and even now I should be for supporting the war 'there to this extent, that by our exertions we force 'the French to a greater comparative expenditure of 'their resources than we are likely to suffer, and that 'we do not ultimately injure our own means of de-'fence, in which will be included the power of with-'drawing our army without material loss, if it should 'be found necessary to do so.'

When, therefore, the noble stand made by Lord

* I find in Colonel Shawe's Memoirs, to which I have already alluded more than once, that Lord Wellesley entertained the same opinion as to the course Napoleon would pursue. 'Lord Wellesley 'certainly expected,' Colonel Shawe says, 'that Bonaparte would feel 'the necessity of endeavouring to drive the English army from the 'Peninsula, before he attempted to pursue his schemes of ambition in 'the North, and that he would have directed all his forces to that 'object after the peace with Austria, in 1810.—*Supplement to the Duke of Wellington's Despatches*, vol. vii.

Wellington before Lisbon, and his patience in there awaiting the sure effects of time and the failure of their supplies on the French army, had been rewarded by entire success; when the enemy had been driven to a disastrous retreat, and to the total evacuation of the Portuguese territory, no man was found to rejoice more unfeignedly than my father in this success. And he joined eagerly in supporting the vote of thanks proposed by Lord Liverpool, 'for the ability, fortitude, 'and perseverance'—so the resolution ran—'which 'he (Lord Wellington) had displayed in the important 'services he had performed in the defence of Portugal 'against the enemy.

He was the more anxious to mark his entire concurrence on this occasion, because, as already mentioned, he had formerly felt it to be his duty not to assent to the vote of thanks proposed after the battle of Talavera, and because, as he admitted, he had been one of those who 'anticipated a very different result 'to the campaign from that which had happily taken 'place. He could not sit silent,' he said, 'on this 'occasion, impressed as he was with feelings of grati-'tude and admiration towards that great commander 'who was the subject of this vote, and deriving a just 'national pride from the consideration that the honour 'of the country had been so greatly exalted by the 'conduct of that great general and his brave army. 'There were also additional motives of imperative 'force, and of a nature personal to himself, which

'made him anxious to follow the noble Earl, and to se-
'cond the present motion.' These were 'the apparent
'contrast, or contradiction, as some might call it, be-
'tween the sentiments he had now delivered, and the
'opinions he had expressed on former occasions when
'the nature and policy of the campaign in Portugal
'were the subject of discussion. . . . He trusted their
'Lordships would do him the justice to believe that
'the opinions which he had formerly delivered, though
'now happily contradicted by the event, were at least
'the sincere and honest dictates of his mind, taken up
'from no illiberal or invidious feeling. He had no
'hesitation to qualify and retract them; and this very
'circumstance, perhaps, gave a value to his vote on
'the present occasion which would render it, pro-
'bably, not less grateful to him who was its object,
'and which would not have belonged to it had he
'been one of those who anticipated success from the
'greatness of the means employed to obtain it. Those
'who looked forward to success at all periods of the
'campaign, were bound to acknowledge the valour and
'consummate skill of the commander of the allied
'forces; but that acknowledgment was still more
'amply due from those who, like him, did conceive
'the difficulties in which Lord Wellington was placed,
'to be such as to threaten him and his army with the
'greatest danger, and greatly to diminish the hopes of
'a successful issue. This was the only use he wished
'to make of these recollections and allusions, which

'only served to exalt in his mind the character of this 'consummate Commander, and to heighten his grati- 'tude for that transcendent skill and valour which 'had surmounted such formidable difficulties.'

He hailed with equal joy and hopefulness the news of the brilliant victory of Salamanca in 1812, and most heartily and sincerely did he congratulate Lord Holland, who had ever been the fast friend of the Spaniards, on that event. 'I must congratulate you,' he writes, 'on the confirmation of Lord Wellington's victory, 'for although the official accounts have not yet reached 'me, those which appeared in the papers brought by 'the last post, show that it must have been decisive 'and complete. This is indeed a great event in what- 'ever view you may take of it, whether you look to 'its effects immediately on the war in the Peninsula, 'or to its possible, and I hope not improbable, in- 'fluence on that which is carrying on in the north of 'Europe.'

To this latter war, indeed, when (contrary to the belief he had expressed, and which, indeed, was only founded upon the reasonings of common sense) Napoleon had fairly committed himself in the invasion of Russia, he looked from the first with the most sanguine hope that it must lead to ultimate success in the general struggle against French domination; and before the French army had suffered a single reverse, while it was still advancing in unbroken and overpowering strength, he expressed his just appreciation of the position of

the French Emperor. 'In the north,' he writes, 'if 'Bonaparte is unsuccessful, or indeed if he does not 'obtain some decisive success, its consequences (those, 'namely, of the victory of Salamanca) may be incal- 'culable. For though I do not believe that he has 'sustained anything like even a partial defeat, and 'though it cannot be doubted that his manœuvres 'have obliged the Russians to abandon a position 'which they must have intended to defend, and have 'enabled him to overrun a great portion of territory, 'from which he will draw considerable resources for 'the future prosecution of the war; yet it seems to 'me equally clear that he has failed in his object of 'bringing on an action which might have had a more 'decisive result;* and his disappointment is strongly 'expressed in the complaints, which his bulletins con- 'tain, of the failure of some of his expectations from 'the inactivity or negligence of his generals. In 'short, the Russian army is still untouched, and a pro- 'tracted war at such a distance, particularly with the 'loss both of reputation and power, which he is sus-

* The Duke of Wellington, I have heard, considered that Napoleon's great fault in this war was, that he made a great battle the object of the campaign, and that he continued to run after it till he had been drawn on to Moscow, from whence a retreat without disaster was impossible. A battle, he thought, should never be sought for *itself*. If one became necessary in pursuing some well-considered and defined object, it ought to be accepted, but could never, in his opinion, stand itself in the place of such an object. Napoleon, however, who had been accustomed to see the princes opposed to him brought at once to his feet by a single victory, had some excuse for acting differently.

'taining in Spain must place him in the greatest 'difficulties.'*

Sanguine, however, as were the hopes which my father had expressed, 'they depended,' he added, 'on 'two circumstances. First, that Bonaparte shall be 'detained in Russia without gaining any decided 'success; and, secondly, that your friends the 'Spaniards shall at last make only a moderate 'exertion in their own cause; and surely such an 'event would animate even stones. I must admit, 'however, that experience justifies strong apprehen-'sions on this subject.'†

The events which followed the battle of Salamanca, and the disastrous retreat of the British army from Burgos, seemed amply to justify these apprehensions. 'I had hoped,' he writes to Lord Holland, in December 1812, 'that the opportunity afforded them by the 'victory of Salamanca, and the Russian war, might 'have produced some exertion; but if this oppor-'tunity has been lost, and if, even with the force 'remaining in Spain, the French have regained so 'decided a superiority over Lord Wellington, what 'hope could there have been, if Bonaparte had con-'cluded such a peace with Russia, as would have 'enabled him to apply his undivided power to the war 'in the Peninsula?' And how much less hope if he had never pushed his differences with Russia to a

* Letter to Lord Holland, August 12, 1812.
† Letter to Lord Holland, August 29, 1812.

rupture, which it is clear that Power was anxious to avoid; or attempted, even in the event of war, his insane invasion of her territory.

But the turn which affairs had taken in Russia, and the accounts which were daily arriving of the reverses and sufferings of the French army during the fatal retreat from Moscow, inspired him with a sanguine hope that, notwithstanding the shortcomings of the Spaniards, the French would not be able to maintain the contest in the Peninsula. 'The events in Russia,' he writes to Lord Holland, 'are, indeed, beyond all 'hope, and almost beyond comprehension. That 'Bonaparte might have lost a decisive battle I can 'conceive. Accident, mistake, the failure of a column, 'the misunderstanding, negligence, or cowardice of a 'commander in an important point, might have pro-'duced this effect, without the fault of the general, 'and in spite of the best-concerted plan of operations. 'But that he should have pressed on in such a 'country, at such a season, and to such a distance, as 'to have no retreat, and to expose his army to de-'struction, almost without a battle, is quite incon-'ceivable.' 'Our being in Spain,' he says in the same letter, 'when the French give up the struggle, 'will, perhaps, be a great advantage.' This proved, however, he thought, that 'the success of the contest 'depended on other causes, in a much greater degree, 'than on our exertions; and if it were not for these, 'I see no ground for your hope that the enemy must

'retire again to the Ebro, or that they would not, if 'their forces were under one commander, very soon 'compel us to quit the Peninsula altogether.'

It was not, however, to the backwardness of the Spaniards alone that he ascribed the disappointment of the hopes that had been raised by the victory of Salamanca. Our own Ministers had, he thought, been sadly wanting in exertions to provide Lord Wellington with the means of following up his success, and he warmly supported a motion for inquiry which was made on the subject by Lord Wellesley, in March 1813.

There was at this time a great approximation of opinion between Lord Wellesley, who had resigned the office of Foreign Secretary shortly before the death of Mr. Perceval, and the Whigs.—On the Catholic Question—the first of the two questions proposed by him as the basis of negotiation for a new Ministry in the preceding May,—there was, indeed, a perfect agreement.—On the second question, it is true—that, namely, of the conduct in the war in the Peninsula,—there was apparently an important difference of opinion, Lord Wellesley contending that we should 'engage in the contest as principals,' while my father and Lord Grenville thought we should only act as auxiliaries. 'If we continued to be left as principals 'in the war of the Peninsula,' my father said, in his speech on the vote of thanks to Lord Wellington already mentioned, 'he much doubted, still, the chances of our

'being ultimately successful. There must be very 'different exertions made from what we had hitherto 'witnessed on the part of the Spaniard,* to enable 'us to entertain a rational hope that the indepen- 'dence of the Peninsula would, or could be finally 'established.'.

Lord Grenville, who had ever been, and who continued to be, a strenuous advocate for the vigorous prosecution of the war with France, condemned, still more strongly than my father, the policy of making England a principal in the Spanish war, and had even gone the length of doubting the propriety of sending troops to Spain at all.

It does not seem, however, that this difference of opinion between my father, and Lord Grenville, and Lord Wellesley, would have led to any practical difficulty between them—feeling, as they did, on both sides, the necessity of making every exertion possible to strengthen Lord Wellington, and to place him in a

* Even Lord Wellesley, in the course of his speech on the motion above mentioned, said, 'that it had always appeared to him from the 'very beginning of the struggle, that the only solid ground of success, 'the only reasonable hope of ultimate victory, the only practical sys- 'tem of resistance which could be adopted, was to awaken in the 'people of Spain a spirit of hostility to France. . . If they could be 'brought to this pitch of patriotism and resistance, everything might 'be hoped from the contest. It was true, indeed, that the perseverance 'he had described was a species of which philosophy afforded no defi- 'nition, nor history any record, but it was by that *spirit alone* that any- 'thing great could be achieved in the struggle between Spain and 'France.'

Is this opinion quite consistent with that which he pronounces in the same speech, in favour of our being 'engaged as principals?'

position to be able to profit by any opportunity, that the events in the North of Europe were likely to open to him.

My father had watched these events in their course with the most intense interest, always hoping that they might lead ultimately to the re-establishment of general peace. The reverses which the French Emperor had sustained might, he thought, now induce him to listen to proposals made in a sincere and moderate spirit; and having no confidence in the constancy of the Continental Powers in a prolonged struggle, or, should the war continue, in their military operations being so conducted as to afford much prospect of ultimate success against such a commander as Napoleon, wielding the whole resources of the French nation, and directing its armies by his single, undisputed will; it was his opinion that the opportunity now offered of entering upon negotiations, with some hope that they might lead to a satisfactory result, should not be neglected.

In January 1813, before the first successes of the French army in the campaign of that year had encouraged the Emperor Napoleon to refuse his assent to the terms of peace proposed by Austria,* and before that Power had, in consequence of his refusal, declared against France, there had been some talk of a mission

* I think he never positively rejected the terms proposed; but hesitated so long, that when at last instructions were sent to M. de Noailles to agree to them, it was too late, and Austria had joined the confederacy.

to Vienna. Mr. Adair had been led to believe in the possibility of its being proposed to him to undertake this mission; and, in contemplation of such a proposition being made to him, he consulted my father as to the propriety of his accepting it.

The answer to this appeal involved other considerations beyond those of the nature of the mission and its objects, and of the probability of success or failure in undertaking it. It involved, further, a question of party allegiance, and on such a subject my father always thought that every man must judge for himself, according to his own feeling, of the course which it became him to pursue. The more strong his own feeling was on the subject, the less he was inclined to offer advice which might not be well received. But his long and intimate friendship with Mr. Adair led him in this instance to give his opinion freely and without reserve, and he thus replied to the appeal made to him.

'With respect to this matter,' he says, 'I feel some 'delicacy, and no small degree of difficulty, the more 'as I am convinced that to tell any of my friends that 'they ought not to accept any employment from per-'sons to whom we are opposed together in a party 'connection, is nothing less than to condemn them to 'a perpetual exclusion from all employment. But 'this is a feeling which cannot and ought not to pre-'vent my stating frankly what I think, even at such 'a risk, to *you*. . . .

'I must fairly state, then, that in your situation, 'standing as you do with respect to the present Ministers, I think I should not accept such a mission if it 'were proposed to me. The obligations of a party 'connection will no doubt sometimes interfere with the 'opportunities of public service; but looking at such 'a party as ours, as constituted on a public principle, 'and in itself forming a great public interest, it resolves 'itself into the weight of one public duty balanced 'against another. Generally speaking, therefore, the 'harm that is done to public characters by such a connection with political opponents (for you may be 'assured that the world is too uncharitable not to put 'a bad construction upon it), and the example and 'encouragement it gives to others, without the same 'motives or the same justification, for a defection from 'the cause in which they are engaged, are evils which, 'in my mind, greatly overbalance the partial good 'which may result from the use of an occasion such 'as that which we are contemplating.

'But I am convinced that your acceptance of a mission to Vienna under these Ministers would eventually implicate you in the greatest difficulties. To 'accept it at all, except on the principles and terms 'which you have described, is evidently out of the 'question. But suppose these terms and principles 'acceded to, what security can you have for their being 'acted upon in their true spirit? In the first place, 'believing these Ministers to be the creatures of the

'moment, and to have no settled views or system, even 'if they at this moment desire peace, I can have no 'security that some new speculation, founded upon 'nothing better perhaps than the idle rumour of some 'disturbance in France, would not entirely alter their 'inclination. In the next place, you cannot doubt 'that their own views of policy would give way at 'any moment to those of the Court; and between the 'two, though they might profess fairly, and give you 'instructions ostensibly suitable to your own opinion, 'you must be sanguine indeed if you could hope, that a 'plausible rupture of any negotiations which you 'might be directed to bring about with France, and 'the acquisition of Austria as an ally in the war, 'would not be their first object, instead of being, as 'they ought to be, secondary only upon the failure of 'a fair, open, and moderate attempt at peace. 'The 'consequence would be, that you would find yourself 'involved in their measures without the possibility of 'exempting yourself from the blame; for between the 'obligations of duty in such a situation and the various 'means by which the objects of your mission might 'be defeated, whilst the word of promise was kept to 'the ear, you would be deprived of all power of mak-'ing out a plain and intelligible case in your own de-'fence.

'This you will say resolves itself into not accepting 'a confidential mission from persons in whom you can 'have no confidence, or rather, whom you have every

'reason to distrust. In truth I think so. I should 'have much more to say, but I have said enough in a 'case where my opinion is so strong and so decided as 'in this. I shall be sorry if it does not agree with 'yours; but being asked the question, I feel that I 'should have no excuse in not answering it without 'reserve.'

The hopes of peace which the French losses in Russia had encouraged my father to indulge were sadly damped by the hesitation of Napoleon to entertain the proposals of Austria, by the adherence of that Power to the confederacy against France, and by the resumption of hostilities. But as the events of the war in Germany proved more and more unfavourable to the French arms, as the successes of the allies in the campaign of 1813 followed each other in rapid succession, until crowned by the decisive victory of Leipsic, his hope again rose that a permanent and secure peace might be the result.

But to effect this, he thought our true policy was to show moderation in our demands; and, notwithstanding the decisive nature of the victory gained by the allies at Leipsic, he held it to be impolitic to push matters to an extremity, or to risk driving the enemy to desperation, by insisting on terms which he would rather fight to the last than agree to; with all the chances that his own superior skill, and the great resources of France would still afford him, in a prolonged contest carried on on her own soil.

'The time is come,' my father writes to Mr. Adair, on the 14th of November 1813, 'when we may hope 'to make a peace upon such principles as to afford a 'reasonable hope of permanency and security. But 'in my mind this will depend much more on its being 'made whilst the weight and union of the Confederacy 'are entire, than upon the particular concessions to 'be gained from France. So much of concession 'undoubtedly must be insisted on, as to secure both 'the general and separate independence of the allies; 'but if this is supposed to be unattainable, except by 'the reduction of France within her ancient limits, I 'very much fear, if we act upon that principle, we 'shall produce another fatal reaction from France, or 'in a protracted contest (for who can hope that such 'an object can be accomplished by a short effort?), that 'we shall see the present Confederacy dissolve.' He was always most mistrustful both of the constancy of our various allies, and of their ability to maintain a prolonged struggle.

'Approving, therefore, of the policy which would 'cultivate our allies, which would endeavour to unite 'them in peace as well as in war, and which should have 'for its main object the establishment of a balance to 'the power of France, I may, perhaps, from the fear 'I have expressed, be more inclined to negotiation, 'upon terms short of what at the beginning of the 'last century would have been thought necessary, 'than many of our friends would approve. I confess,

'therefore, that I should have been better pleased if 'Lord Grenville had not gone, as he appears to me to 'have done, beyond the line which the Ministers had 'marked in the Prince's speech, and particularly if he 'had omitted what he said about Holland. Not 'because I do not wish Holland, and Italy, and 'Switzerland, and the Netherlands too, to be sepa-'rated from France, but because I think there is so 'much danger in the attempt, that I apprehend losing 'by it the advantages we now possess. It is possible, 'indeed, that the consequences of this campaign and 'its effects both in France and in the other countries 'of Europe, may be such as to open this prospect 'fairly to our hopes; but till we see our way more 'clearly, I should think it very unadvisable to pledge 'ourselves to more than our own means and the 'circumstances of the alliance may appear to place 'within our reach.'

After stating his fear, that 'if we endeavour to 'goad or bribe' Austria, whose views were supposed to be moderate, 'to undertake more than her own 'views of her present policy would suggest, the first 'reverse will produce a dissolution of the Confede-'racy,' he proceeds: 'Above all things, therefore, I 'think it necessary to negotiate in time, and for such 'objects as the allies will mutually and cordially 'pursue; rather than for the sake of obtaining what, 'though most desirable, or almost necessary, may 'be beyond our reach, to risk the loss of the more

'limited advantages which it is now in our power to 'secure.

'When I speak, however, of what is now in our 'power, I must guard myself against being supposed 'to be too confident. Perhaps I ought rather to say, 'what it would be felt both by friends and enemies in 'general, our present situation gives us a right to 'demand. To this I am not very sanguine in my 'belief that Bonaparte would now consent. Much 'will depend upon the feeling of the people of whose 'resources he has the disposal. But I think the trial 'should be made whenever it can be done with the 'general consent and good will of the allies. . . . I 'am not sorry,' he adds, 'that I was not present on 'the first day; for I should, I have no doubt, have 'been thought too pacific. If I had spoken, I should 'have been under the necessity not only of putting 'some guards on what Grenville said about Holland, 'but of disclaiming the support of the present Con-'federacy, as being the necessary result of the policy 'of Pitt's Government in the original war against 'France. Perhaps, if I had heard Grenville, I might 'not have felt the difficulty which appears in the 'report of his speech; but if we are to talk about the 'questions of 1793, I must show that the present 'alliance is supported by me upon the ground that it 'is directly contrasted with the coalition of that 'period. The fact is, that the allies have now been 'placed by France in the situation in which France

'was originally placed by the allies. The success of 'both has been occasioned by the spirit of resistance 'produced by injury and oppression; and my great 'hopes of the present confederacy are chiefly derived 'from this, that it has arisen rather from the feeling 'of the people, than the policy of the Governments 'which it embraces.'

If, contrary to the apprehensions expressed by my father, the policy of those who advocated a prosecution of the war till France should be again reduced to her ancient limits, was successful—the cause, as all who have read the various histories which record the events of 1813 and 1814 must be aware, lay entirely with the Emperor Napoleon himself, who threw away, under the influence of some partial and fleeting success, repeated opportunities of concluding peace on honourable and advantageous terms.

My father at all times attached the greatest importance to the maintenance of a cordial understanding with the Continental Powers. His opinion at this time, as expressed in another letter of January 5th, 1814, to Mr. Adair was, that 'the first object we ought 'to have in view is that of a defensive connection 'with the present Confederates in peace: and that no 'frontier, no territorial arrangement whatever, is of 'equal value to the preservation of that connection. 'By this you will not imagine that I mean to sur- 'render the care of all British interests to the discre- 'tion of the allies in the negotiation and the terms

'of peace. That can only happen when by our mis-
'management we lose all influence in their councils.
'This will be most effectually provided against, when
'by a frank exposition of views directed to the com-
'mon welfare, and a conduct regulated by a firm and
'liberal policy, we inspire that confidence which can
'alone secure to us the weight we ought to possess;
'and which subsidies, lavished with ever so profuse
'a hand, will not acquire, if that policy is wanting.'

During the latter part of 1812, and the beginning of 1813, there had been various indications of a desire on the part of Lord Wellesley to draw nearer to my father and Lord Grenville. There was, as I have already remarked, a great approximation of opinion between them on the main questions of the day, and consequently there existed on my father's side every disposition to consider favourably any proposal that might be made for a junction with Lord Wellesley. When, therefore, in the month of April 1813, a direct overture to that effect was made by the latter through Mr. Adair, my father thus replied: 'I really do not
'wish to add a word to what was so well and so
'judiciously said by you in answer to the communica-
'tion from Lord Wellesley. You have put the
'principle of coalitions in the true light. They never
'can be useful or honourable, unless the parties con-
'cerned in them can be brought to feel that the public
'interests must claim the first, and personal arrange-
'ments only the second consideration. . . . If a

'prospect opened to us of co-operation on the honour-
'able ground of a concurrence in principles and
'opinions, a just sense of public duty must command
'my endeavours to give it effect; and if we unite
'cordially and systematically to rescue the country
'from the dangers which threaten it, future official
'arrangements, should we be called upon to form any,
'will come to be discussed, as you have well stated,
'not between persons jealous of each other, but
'amongst friends united in a common cause, and
'labouring for a common end. Do not, however,
'suppose me so romantic, as to conceive that even
'then personal considerations will not, and ought not,
'to have their fair influences; as poor Fox says, in a
'letter published in Harding's life of Lord Charle-
'mont, to persuade men to disgrace themselves is no
'part of my system; and in forming a junction upon
'public principles, it would be my wish that those
'whom I join, should not only really have, but appear
'to have, the degree of influence which fairly belongs
'to them, which is necessary to the support of their
'public character, and which is therefore required to
'render their services satisfactory to themselves and
'their friends, and useful to the public.

'With such a disposition, ready to allow to others
'all that I claim for myself, I should come to the dis-
'cussion of any fair proposition for an union of par-
'ties. . . . But this union can only take place by a
'full and unreserved communication of our respective

'views and opinions, by the complete banishment 'of all disposition to intrigue, and, above all, by the 'immediate and firm rejection of every intimation 'which may be held out by the Court of its separate 'favour, and the absolute renunciation of all separate 'pretensions on that account.' . . .

Nothing, however, came of the overture thus made by Lord Wellesley. The great obstacle in the way of an arrangement was Mr. Canning, to a junction with whom several of the principal members of the Whig party had the strongest objections; and though my father himself did not push his own objections so far as to think, if there was a fair prospect of present agreement in principles and opinions, that past differences should be allowed to stand in the way of a junction which would be of advantage to the public, yet he too said, 'If he (Mr. Canning) is to be for ever 'stating that the country owes its salvation to Pitt, 'and that it has now no other hope of safety but in 'adherence to his system, I do not see how we can 'hope to act with him.'

But it was not only found impracticable, at this time, to give increased strength to the Opposition by a junction with other parties professing an equal disapprobation of the course pursued by the Government, it proved scarcely less difficult to preserve harmony in the ranks of the Opposition as it already existed. The same violent section, of whose proceedings my father had already so often had reason to complain,

was again working him similar annoyance; and in contemplation of the prospect before him, and the slight hope it afforded that he would be able to maintain that unity, without which the Opposition could act to no good purpose, he not only felt indisposed to leave the North to involve himself in difficulties which he was 'convinced,' he said, 'that he could do little 'or nothing to obviate by his presence,' but even expressed a desire to withdraw himself entirely from the lead of the party. 'If I am absent,' he writes to Lord Holland, 'I hope it will be generally felt I shall 'be able to say with truth that I stand clear of Whit-'bread's motions.' And alluding to his own want of power to induce Mr. Whitbread to modify these motions, and to the consequences that must inevitably follow his adhering to them, he proceeds: 'The strong 'inclination of my mind is to believe that the only 'remedy is your taking the place which I now occupy 'in the party. Do not imagine that this is any move-'ment of spleen, or that I do not know all that your 'friendship will make you feel at my even hinting 'such a proposition; but it is my sincere wish to see 'the thing in your hands. When known to be placed 'there by my desire, I am sure no dissatisfaction will 'be felt even amongst my most particular and nearest 'friends, and I am persuaded that to all others of our 'branch of the Opposition such an arrangement would 'be most acceptable. You would have my complete 'support, even my active support in Parliament when

'it could be useful; and I am quite sure that the 'affairs of the party would go on in every respect 'much better. If the discontented among the members 'of Opposition are to be satisfied, this would render 'it more easy; if new alliances are to be made they 'would be found more practicable; and even if the 'Prince is ever to be reconciled to a Whig Adminis-'tration a great part of the difficulty, and the whole 'of his personal objections, would be removed.'

It is needless to say that such a proposition could not be for a moment entertained; and my father continued to be the acknowledged leader of the Whig party, and of the Opposition to Lord Liverpool's Administration, giving a more or less active attendance in Parliament, a more or less direct superintendence to the affairs of the party, till the death of Lord Liverpool, some fourteen years later, leading to a total change in the relative position of Parliamentary parties, produced, as will be seen in its place, a temporary separation between him and the main body of the Whigs.

CHAPTER VII.

FROM CLOSE OF SESSION OF 1812, TO THE SEPARATION OF MY FATHER AND LORD GRENVILLE IN 1817.

I SHALL have in this Chapter to record the final political separation of my father and Lord Grenville; but before coming to the events which produced that unfortunate result, I have still to notice more than one subject of great public interest and constitutional importance, on which there continued to be a perfect agreement between them. It was not till after the return of Napoleon from Elba, when they differed as to the policy which that event made expedient; and until the occurrence of serious domestic disturbances after the final conclusion of peace had revived a difference of opinion which had existed between them during the early years of the French Revolution, as to the mode in which such troubles should be met; that farther agreement between them became impossible, and that the political alliance, which had so long and so advantageously united them, was gradually and tacitly dissolved.

The years 1813 and 1814, however, found them

still acting cordially together. They had watched with equal interest the result of the French invasion of Russia, and the events which had followed in 1813, both in Germany and the Peninsula, and which had far exceeded my father's most sanguine expectations, high as those expectations had been raised. from the moment that he had seen the French Emperor fairly committed within the Russian territory. They had equally lamented the want of vigour and capacity, which, as it appeared to them, prevented our Government from turning these events to the best advantage, and they concurred in condemning the conduct of Ministers, as failing on the one hand to profit by the many opportunities afforded by the success of the allied arms in 1813, for entering upon negotiations for peace under the most favourable circumstances, and wanting, on the other hand, in those vigorous efforts for the prosecution of the war, which that success seemed to point out as alone wanting to insure its speedy and triumphant termination.

But however desirous they might be of combined and vigorous exertion in the common cause, there was one measure adopted by Ministers (probably with that view) to which, as fraught in their opinion with the most flagrant injustice, and opposed to every principle which should regulate the mutual relations of independent nations, they gave their most strenuous opposition. This was, the signature of a treaty with Sweden, which committed us as parties to the forcible

transfer of Norway to that Power—a transfer by which Denmark was to be punished for her continued adherence to France, and the co-operation of Sweden with the Allies was to be rewarded.

On the 3rd of March 1813, a treaty was signed between Great Britain and Sweden, by which it was stipulated, that 'in consideration of the proof given 'by Sweden of her desire to contribute to the success 'of the common cause, . . . His Britannic Majesty 'will not only not oppose any obstacle to the annexa- 'tion and union in perpetuity of the kingdom of 'Norway as an integral part of the kingdom of 'Sweden; but also will assist the views of His Majesty 'the King of Sweden to that effect, either by his good 'offices, or by employing, if necessary, his naval co- 'operation in concert with the Swedish and Russian 'forces.'

In June 1813, when this treaty came under discussion in the House of Lords, my father denounced the course pursued by Government as being 'incon- 'sistent as well with policy as with justice; with 'those maxims which were necessary to the common 'protection of all nations; with those principles of 'public law, the violation of which, on the part of 'France, that House had so often heard reprobated 'in terms as severe as they were just.'*

Though concurring in the policy which had been

* The treatment of Denmark seemed the more unjust, as in the month of February, and before the conclusion of the above treaty, she had expressed her readiness to co-operate with the Allies.

urged in defence of the treaty, of cultivating the closest connection with Russia, my father regretted that 'that connection should have been sullied by 'engagements which bound us to assist in robbing an 'independent Power;' and declared that he would 'never consent to purchase any advantages at the 'expense of justice.'

But it was not only that he objected to the treaty as sanctioning an unjust and unmerited spoliation of Denmark; he took his stand yet more strongly against the principle so extensively applied afterwards to the territorial arrangements of the Treaty of Vienna; the principle by which certain great Powers arrogated to themselves the right of disposing of independent States, without regard to the wishes or interest of the people thus disposed of. And when, after the termination of hostilities in 1814, Denmark had found herself compelled to agree to the cession demanded of her, and it was sought, by means of a blockade, maintained by British ships, to coerce the Norwegians into submission to this transfer of their allegiance, it seemed to him to be a gross and unjustifiable outrage against the rights and liberties of an independent people, and as such, it met with his determined but unavailing opposition.

In arguing against the treaty with Sweden, he had expressed his opinion, as regarded our treatment of Denmark, that 'British policy had never sustained a 'deeper shock—the British character had never re-

'ceived a deeper stain—than by that transaction.' He now contended, as regarded Norway, that even the consent of Denmark could not justify its transfer to another Power, contrary to the wishes of its people. 'The rights of the sovereign over his subjects,' he said, 'are not the rights of property. They do not 'confer the privilege of transferring them from one to 'another like cattle attached to the soil. . . . No 'matter to what degree the impunity of power might 'silence the claims of right, its nature cannot be 'altered; it is equally sacred, equally important, and 'is equally to be recognised, in every attempt to pro-'tect the weak against the strong.'

Arguing upon these principles, he contended that under the reciprocal engagements that bind a sovereign and his people to each other, and by which allegiance is given in return for protection, the King of Denmark had no right to alienate the sovereignty of Norway, without the consent of the people of that country.* 'He might withdraw himself,' he said, 'from their protection. He might absolve them from 'their allegiance to himself; but he had no right to 'transfer that allegiance to any other State. It be-'came, then, the right of the people to decide to whom 'their allegiance should be given.'

In answer to the argument by which it was attempted

* Lord Grenville, in supporting the address moved by my father, spoke also of the 'horrible injustice by which an unoffending people 'were to be bent to the dominion of a foreign power.'

to defend the course pursued with respect to Norway, as conferring 'very important advantages upon the 'Norwegian people,' my father asked, 'whether it 'could be argued that any country shall be obliged to 'accept what a foreign State thinks proper to consider 'as happiness?' 'No sort of tyranny,' he adds, 'can, 'in my judgment, be conceived more complete, than 'that a Government should undertake to force another 'people to submit to that system which such Govern-'ment may regard as happy, although that people 'may think quite the contrary.' And in moving for an address to the Regent, praying him, in accordance with the sentiments above expressed, to suspend the hostile operations by which it was sought to coerce the Norwegians into submission, he called upon the House to act in a manner 'consistent with the honour and 'character of the country,' and to manifest their sympathy with a 'nation struggling so valiantly as the 'Norwegians continued to struggle, in support of their 'rights and privileges.' 'If it be said,' he concluded, 'that the tendency of my motion would be to engage 'this country in a war with Russia and Sweden, still 'I should say, that whatever result might follow, I 'would ask my country, for the sake of its credit and 'character, for the sake of justice and humanity, to 'co-operate in the honourable and glorious cause of Norway.'

This appeal to the House of Lords was vigorously supported by Lord Grenville.

'On all the grounds,' he said, 'first of justice, right, 'and the law of nations, and lastly even upon political 'considerations, I feel myself called upon to support 'any measure that, stopping for a short period the 'rapid tide of events, would afford a breathing-time 'to enable Ministers to reflect upon the consequences 'of the step they are now taking, and to pause before 'they employ the British flag to cover projects so dis-'graceful, which excite the disgust and abhorrence of 'ninety-nine hundredths of the natives of the civilised 'world.' Their efforts were, however, ineffectual, and the proposed address was negatived by a majority, including proxies, of one hundred and fifteen to thirty-four.

I have already mentioned the generous and ungrudging spirit in which my father had joined in the vote of thanks to Lord Wellington after the retreat of the French from Portugal in 1811, and have shown how little he was disposed, as has been often ignorantly imputed to him, to depreciate the merits of our great commander, or to undervalue the importance of his services. He was not present when the thanks of the House were voted for the battle of Salamanca; nor afterwards, when they were again voted for the still more decisive victory of Vittoria. But no one exulted more sincerely than he did in these triumphs of the British arms; and in March 1814, when the victory of Orthes, and the occupation of Bordeaux by a portion of the British army, had once more called forth from

Government and from Parliament the renewed expression of a nation's gratitude, he eagerly seized the opportunity of again recording his admiration of the great achievements of our troops and of their general. 'He 'could not,' he said, in seconding Lord Liverpool's motion for the vote of thanks on this occasion—'he 'could not add anything to the detail so properly 'given by the Noble Earl, and which so clearly esta-'blished the importance of this last triumph of the 'illustrious commander whom they were now so justly 'called upon again to thank. He said the *last* triumph, 'because he trusted that the series of splendid suc-'cesses which had raised the glory of the British arms 'to a height of renown unknown in any age or coun-'try, in the annals of history. . . . would be finally 'crowned by a safe and honourable peace, to which 'our illustrious commander and the glorious army he 'handled would have so essentially contributed.' And on a subsequent occasion, in referring to what he now said in support of this vote of thanks: 'If,' he observed, 'I was not as forward and zealous as the Noble Earl 'himself (Lord Liverpool) in applauding the achieve-'ments and expressing our gratitude for the services of 'Lord Wellington, I can only say that I failed most 'lamentably in the language I selected, to give utter-'ance to the sincere and ardent feelings of my heart.'

But when it was sought to establish a claim on the part of the Home Government to a similar meed of praise to that which he had shown himself thus ready

and anxious to accord to Lord Wellington and his gallant followers, he demurred to any such obligation; and in answer to Lord Carlisle, who found fault with his speech on this occasion, because he had omitted to give Ministers the share of credit to which he (Lord Carlisle *) thought they were entitled, he stated that the occasion did not seem to him one on which any allusion whatever to the conduct of Ministers was called for; and this more particularly, as they refused obstinately to afford the information, which could alone enable the House to judge of that conduct: and, Lord Carlisle supporting the Government in this refusal, it was, he thought, 'a little extraor-'dinary, if not inconsistent, in his noble friend, to 'call upon them to follow his example in pronouncing 'an eulogium upon the general conduct of the ser-'vants of the Crown.'†

In the general principle of the settlement by which the Bourbons were to be placed on the throne of France, as that which was 'upon the whole the best 'that could have been attained for the preservation of

* Grandfather of the present Lord Carlisle.

† Ministers affirmed that the negotiations at Chatillon had been broken off by the 'ambition of Bonaparte, and the injustice of his de-'mands, and not by any want of moderation on the part of the Allies.' On the first rupture of those negotiations Lord Liverpool had promised to lay the papers connected with them on the table of the House. During the recess, the abdication of Napoleon had become known; fresh negotiations had been entered into with the Bourbons; and Lord Liverpool now resisted the production of the papers as being no longer necessary. Without them, however, my father declared it was impossible to express any approval of the conduct of Government.

'the general liberties of mankind, and for the peace, 'security, and happiness of Great Britain,' my father was disposed to concur. 'It was the best,' he thought, 'with only one exception; for he could have wished 'that what had recently been done in Paris in the 'presence of a foreign force, had been accomplished 'by the uninfluenced exertions of the French people.'

However he might assent to the expediency of the exceptional course which the state of things in France seemed, as it were, to force upon the Allies, still the right of every independent people to choose their own form of Government was sacred in his eyes, and he could not, without reluctance and regret, consent to see it even temporarily set aside.

But though he thus agreed, under the peculiar circumstances of the time, in the principle of the settlement proposed after the termination of hostilities in 1814, as far as related to the restoration of the Bourbon dynasty in France, he strongly condemned the proceedings of Congress with regard to the stipulations and territorial arrangements by which that settlement was to be accompanied; and to the course now pursued by the Allies he was inclined, with Lord Grenville and Lord Wellesley, principally to attribute the return of Napoleon from Elba.

That event occurred in March 1815, while the Congress was still sitting at Vienna, and on the 7th of April was the subject of debate in the House of Lords, on a motion of Lord Wellesley's, who de-

nounced, in the strongest language, 'the conduct of 'Congress as having led to the events which they had 'to regret,' . . . and 'the system which the Powers 'at Vienna had established, as having been in his 'opinion, the true cause of the dethronement of the 'august family of Bourbon: if that,' Lord Wellesley said, 'could be called a system which was nothing 'but an undigested mass of mutilated materials. No 'general system,' he further said, 'had been acted 'upon. The mere will and pleasure of the parties 'was consulted, and the sovereigns at Vienna had 'punished one Power because it first entered into the 'contest with them, and another because it had last 'quitted the cause which it had espoused. The 'result had been, that instead of fixing a system of 'permanent tranquillity and happiness, the labours of 'Congress had been devoted to establish a system of 'gross injustice and absolute discordance. . . France 'had been severely punished, while other Powers had 'been aggrandized to an immense extent, and great 'accessions of territory had been given to those who 'had, from various causes, become objects of peculiar 'favour. This it was that had produced so strong a 'feeling in France against the Bourbons; for the 'people considered them merely as agents in the 'hands of foreign Powers, who had made them the 'instruments of degradation and injustice to the French nation. One of the chief advantages obtained 'by Bonaparte, and of which he had made such ample

'use in his declarations, was that France had been de-
'graded and lowered in the eyes of Europe, by means
'of those whom foreigners had placed upon her throne.'

My father supported the view taken by Lord Wellesley in a powerful speech; and in answer to the plea of Ministers that 'Europe could not revert 'from a state of military armament to a condition of 'tranquillity and social happiness, without some con-'vulsion and disturbance in our progress to that 'condition,'—admitting the truth of this proposition, he complained that 'instead of measures having been 'taken to avert the evils which the Noble Lord 'asserted were foreseen, all the arrangements of 'Congress had contributed to produce that convulsion 'and disturbance. 'By the neglect of Ministers,' he said, 'the total want of principle which had marked 'their conduct, and a most culpable blindness to con-'sequences which they now wished to persuade the 'House they had contemplated, the highest interests 'of Europe and of the world had been sacrificed; 'and to them, he thought, was principally to be 'attributed the new war in which we were about to 'be engaged. . . The Noble Earl,' (Liverpool,) he proceeded, 'had argued that it was our interest to 'conclude a peace honourable to France. Unques-'tionably, that was the fit line of policy. . . But 'instead of pursuing it, as the Noble Marquis (Wel-'lesley) had said, our conduct had been totally dif-'ferent, and we had given Bonaparte and the French

'people reason to say, that we had made the family 'of Bourbon instruments in the disgrace and degra- 'dation of France in the eyes of the world.'

Lord Grenville concurred in this condemnation of the proceedings of the allied Powers at Vienna, and spoke of the 'loose and negligent stipulations which 'had produced the dreadful alternative that lay before 'them;'—characterizing the treaty by which the war had been terminated in 1814, as 'affording no secu- 'rity against its instant and immediate renewal.'

But though my father and Lord Grenville were thus of one mind as to the causes which had led to the existing state of things in France, they differed widely as to the course which that state of things rendered expedient; and the unfortunate difference thus springing up between them, though not immediately followed by their political separation, may be considered as the first step towards that result, which broke the strength, and for so many years paralysed all the exertions of Opposition.

Lord Grenville starting on the assumption that 'real peace with Bonaparte on the throne of France 'was absolutely unattainable,' was of opinion 'that 'the best hopes of a successful resistance (where 'resistance in some shape or other was a matter of 'necessity) were to be found in immediate and vigor- 'ous exertion on our part, as the only means of 'combining and animating the exertions of the Con- 'tinental Powers.' And with this view he thought

that our object ought to be 'to renew the concert of 'last year with a view to immediate action.'

He supported these opinions on two grounds: the first derived from the nature of Bonaparte's power, founded and maintained as that power had been by military success, which made war, and 'above all, 'war with England, an absolute necessity for him;' the second, resting on the hope that 'in the present 'moment the impressions under which those Powers 'acted last year would be still fresh in their minds. 'They had then found out, however late, that their 'only safety was in united resistance. They had seen 'and felt the destruction they had brought upon 'themselves, by suffering themselves to be succes- 'sively disunited by the bait of partial and temporary 'advantages. These feelings must be still uppermost 'in their minds. But I would not answer for it,' he continues, 'that if we discourage them by showing 'hesitation in our own conduct, and if, by temporiz- 'ing ourselves, we give time and scope for French 'intrigue, we may not see a recurrence of the same 'disgraceful and miserable policy. And then we are 'left absolutely without hope.' Another considera- tion with him was, 'the greater difficulty which 'Bonaparte must now feel in bringing forward, 'exactly in the present moment, the resources and 'means of France, than if time be given him for fresh 'conscriptions,'* &c.

* Letter from Lord Grenville to my father, April 1815.

My father, in his answer to the letter in which Lord Grenville communicated to him the above opinions, admitted the critical situation in which the country was placed by the re-establishment of Bonaparte; and that both 'his personal character, and the 'nature of his power rendered the permanent security 'of any peace with France, while he was at the head 'of the Government, to say the least, extremely 'doubtful.' The ground, also, he thought, 'on which 'any statesman must act, was that of considering that 'a power was established in France which threatened 'the most formidable dangers to this country; and 'that our safety required us to put ourselves imme-'diately on our guard against it.'

Agreeing, however, thus with Lord Grenville as to the character and nature of Napoleon's power, and as to the necessity consequently entailed upon us of immediate and vigorous preparation; and also concurring in the prudence of renewing, if possible, the 'concert 'of last year,' he differed widely as to the object for which that concert should be renewed. Lord Grenville would renew it 'with a view to immediate action.' 'By this,' my father says, 'I must understand that 'you would immediately go to war with France, 'merely because Bonaparte is Emperor. I should 'say that our object ought to be to renew the concert 'of last year on a principle purely defensive. That 'we should consider the Treaty of Paris as a treaty 'between two countries not necessarily abrogated by

'a change in the Government of either; . . . and, 'consequently, that we should not engage anew in 'hostilities without such a cause as would, in other 'circumstances, justify that melancholy extremity be- 'tween two independent Powers. . . . This I should 'urge as the true line of our policy, even if I went 'with you the length of believing all peace with Bona- 'parte to be absolutely impossible. Even in that 'case I should say, more, much more, would depend 'upon the evident justice of our cause than on any 'supposed present advantage from our greater forward- 'ness in preparation. Upon what principle could you 'now declare war against France, except that which 'is so unfortunately and so rashly (I think so unjusti- 'ably) announced in the declaration, viz., the principle 'of excluding Bonaparte personally from the throne of 'France, (the declaration says from the world!)?—thus 'leaving yourselves no alternative but the full attain- 'ment of that object or the most irretrievable failure 'and disgrace. . . . Remember that Pitt, in the very 'height of his popularity and power, was obliged to 'give way, at the very beginning of the war of the 'Revolution, when I brought forward a motion to 'repudiate the principle that the character of the 'existing Government in France precluded negotia- 'tion. He was made to feel that neither the public 'nor the Parliament would support him in the open 'avowal of such a principle. . . . The first effect, 'then, of attacking France in the way which you feel

'yourself called upon to recommend, would be to 'divide the country at home and to increase and con- 'solidate the power of the enemy; nay, to assist and 'expedite the re-establishment of that very military 'system, the present dissolution of which in many of 'its most material parts, you assign as one of your 'main inducements to immediate action. Would the 'hope be much better with respect to the other Powers 'of the confederacy? I fear not. Violent counsels 'are seldom supported with constancy and firmness. 'Past experience, as well as the recent proceedings of 'the Congress, show how little their union is to be 'depended on when their separate interests come in 'the way. After all that I have seen in the last 'twenty years, I should not be very sanguine as to 'their perseverance under reverses, even in a war un- 'dertaken on the strictest principles of self-defence; 'but I am sure a confederacy formed for the purpose 'of expelling Bonaparte from the throne of France 'would break to pieces amidst mutual complaints and 'accusations, on the first bad success.

'Even if I were certain, then, that peace with Bona- 'parte could not ultimately be preserved, I should say, 'take care that your cause is evidently just; but, 'above all, take care that you do not undertake the 'war on a principle which may strengthen your enemy, 'weaken and divide yourselves, and diminish a hope 'of a persevering effort in the confederacy which you 'wish to form. Prepare, indeed. *That* your safety

'requires. But wait till some aggression has given 'you a just cause of war.'

Nor did my father believe, with Lord Grenville, that peace with Napoleon, though doubtful, was impossible, and he thought there were circumstances in his situation which might well be expected to render him more pacific. Without, however, laying much stress upon this consideration, he argued further, on the score of expediency, in favour of delaying any hostile declaration. He doubted, in fact, whether France was not actually better prepared for immediate action than the Allies. 'The best part of our army, much 'reduced by misfortune, is,' he said, 'in America. The 'Russians are beyond the Vistula, and Poland un-'settled. The Prussians have their Saxon spoliation 'to secure and to maintain. Austria will find in Italy 'occupation for a very large proportion of her force. 'France, on the contrary, with an army already perhaps 'too eager for war, more numerous and better equipped 'than you seem to apprehend, will find in the Nether-'lands not only an object which her whole population 'is desirous of pursuing, but allies anxious for her 'assistance; and in the interior of France such num-'bers of returned prisoners and disbanded soldiers, as, 'for a time at least, will fill her ranks without the 'necessity of conscriptions.'

My father thus sums up his reasons against immediate war:—

'1st. Because I think the principle of attacking

'France, for the purpose of compelling her to renounce 'the government of Bonaparte, utterly unjustifiable.

'2nd. Because I think such an attempt exposed to 'accumulated disadvantages and dangers; and, if it 'fails, that it leaves us no hope of escaping absolute 'ruin.

'3rd. Because, though I feel the greatest doubts of 'the possibility of preserving peace, I do not abso- 'lutely despair of it; and I think that chance, however 'doubtful, ought to be preferred to a declaration of 'war.

'And, 4thly. Because by gaining time you leave 'yourselves open to the chances which that time may 'afford; and ultimately, if compelled to engage in 'hostilities, it seems more likely that you would gain, 'than that you would lose by the delay.'

The reasons thus given failed to convince Lord Grenville; and though equally lamented on both sides, the subject of difference was felt by each to be too important to admit of a compromise. 'We must 'both feel,' Lord Grenville wrote, in answer to the letter above quoted, 'in such a case the necessity of 'declaring our sentiments such as they really are. 'To know that yours differ from mine in any degree, 'gives me, as you well know, the greatest pain.' And again he says: 'How deeply I lament this it is need- 'less to say. We must both of us discharge our duty, 'and all I can further say is to assure you, that every 'feeling of my heart will always lead me to make that

'difference as small in character and as remote in time 'as duty will permit, and at all events to confine it 'strictly to those points on which it does really 'exist.'*

My father expresses in his reply his sorrow for the difference that had thus arisen between them in still stronger language. He, too, felt that the question was 'too important to allow either of us to suppress or 'compromise our opinions upon it. But,' he proceeds, 'to say that I lament the difference that exists between 'us would be to express myself too feebly. Since 'Fox's death I have looked to you as the person best 'qualified to take the chief direction of the party in 'which we have acted together. *You* know how little 'I have sought for myself any such distinction. Sepa-'rated from you, I must abandon all hope of being 'useful; and I probably shall withdraw myself from 'all further interference in politics, except upon occa-'sions, if any such should arise, when my duty as an 'individual peer may require that I should state my 'opinions.'

The opinions expressed in the letters above quoted were afterwards stated on either side in the debate which took place in the House of Lords on the 23rd May, on the occasion of a motion by Lord Liverpool for an address to the Regent, to assure him of the 'cordial support of that House in all measures which 'it may be necessary for His Royal Highness to adopt,

* Letter from Lord Grenville to my father, April 1815.

'in conjunction with His Majesty's Allies, against the 'common enemy, at this important crisis.'

My father, lamenting that he had 'on this occasion 'to differ from a noble friend of his, whose enlarged 'understanding, whose liberal opinions, and whose 'extensive experience entitle him to the greatest 'respect;' but considering 'the discharge of duty 'paramount to every other consideration,' moved an amendment to the address, in which he proposed to add to any assurances of support, 'in all measures 'necessary for maintaining the honour of His Majesty's 'Crown,' an expression of dissent from the principle of making the personal proscription of Bonaparte the ground of renewed war with France. 'Such a war,' the amendment said, 'appears to us questionable in 'its principle and fraught with the greatest dangers, 'leaving us no alternative with a view to the re-estab-'lishment of peace, but complete success in destroying 'the Government so proscribed, or humiliation and 'disgrace in submitting to acknowledge it after such 'proscription.'

The battle of Waterloo, with its enormous results, leading to the immediate and entire overthrow of the proscribed Government, averted all the dangers which my father had apprehended from the principle on which we had re-embarked in hostilities; and those who advocated the policy on which the English Government acted, have a right to plead the success with which that policy was attended. But on a calm

review of all the circumstances and events of the time, will any one say that there was no ground for such fears as my father had expressed? His belief that France was better prepared than the Allies for immediate action was verified by the initiative which Napoleon was enabled to take in the short campaign that ensued. And without going the length of saying, with Napoleon at St. Helena, that, in fighting the battle of Waterloo, eighty chances out of one hundred were in his favour, will any one contend that there was no moment during the protracted struggle of the 18th, at which the fortunes of England and of the world seemed to tremble in the balance? And had the scale turned against us, does any one believe that my father's apprehensions, as to the consequences which such a reverse would have had on the confederacy, would not have been amply realised?

The difference which had thus arisen between my father and Lord Grenville was confined at this time to the one subject above referred to. On other subjects the agreement between them was still undisturbed; and almost concurrently with the discussions on the renewed war in which this difference of opinion had shown itself, they had been acting cordially together on a question which was destined in later years to exercise a fatal influence over the union of parties, and the stability of successive Administrations.

The state of the Corn Laws had been brought under the consideration of Parliament during the Ses-

sions of 1814 and 1815, and the measure proposed by the Government for giving increased protection to the agricultural interest had excited the most violent opposition and agitation throughout the country, and had led, in London, to serious riots, attended with loss life. My father formed one of a small minority in the House of Lords which supported Lord Grenville in opposing the new laws. Lord Grenville, far in advance on such subjects of the statesmen of the day, and in anticipation of the policy which has now been universally acquiesced in in England, deprecated any legislation whatever in this matter. 'If he were 'called upon,' he said, 'to describe one of the greatest 'causes of mischief in this country,—one of the tenden- 'cies most deeply to be lamented,—he knew nothing 'that appeared to him to be a more prolific source of 'evil than the proneness to this over-love of legis- 'lative interference. He believed it would be much 'more advantageous to the community at large, he 'was sure it would be infinitely more beneficial to the 'interests of agriculture and of trade, if the Legislature 'could be persuaded to abstain from endeavours to 'meet temporary inconveniences, at every turn, by 'some Bill, some protection, some remedy. He was 'persuaded that nothing could be more wise than that 'principle which it was the fashion always to admire 'in theory, but always to abandon in practice, of 'refraining from perpetual attempts to supply defects, 'to correct errors, to guide speculations, to restrain

'enterprise, to limit profits, to reduce hazards, by 'legislative interference. If it was true that provi- 'dence had implanted in the mind of every man an 'industrious and sagacious view of his own interest, 'by which he was much better directed to the attain- 'ment of his objects than by any legislative assistance, 'why were their Lordships condemned to hear that it 'was so, and yet condemned at the same time to wit- 'ness perpetual and successful attempts at the viola- 'tion of the principle?' . . . He did not advocate, however, any 'sweeping or sudden change.' 'If the 'measures,' he continued, 'which had formerly been 'adopted for the protection of trade and manufactures 'were right, let them be continued—if wrong let them 'be abrogated; not suddenly, but with the caution 'with which all policy, however erroneous, so engrafted 'into our usage by time, should be changed.' . .

My father's opposition, however, was grounded chiefly on the consideration that the House was not in possession of such information upon the subject as should precede, or be the condition of, any legislation upon it. 'The petitioners against the Bill,' he said, 'uniformly stated that the measure would have the 'effect of preventing a cheap supply of food to the 'labouring classes. . . . They might probably be 'labouring under a mistake; their feelings might 'have been improperly excited, . . . but the true 'corrective of this evil would be to go into a dispas- 'sionate inquiry into the subject. . . . If the people

'were right in their views they had a claim on their 'Lordships to interfere to protect them from the in- 'jury they apprehend; if they were wrong it was 'their Lordships' paramount duty to endeavour to en- 'lighten their judgment, and to show at least that 'they had themselves examined the subject.'

Upon the general principle of protection which was involved in the question, my father did not pronounce any decided opinion. He implied, indeed, that if the existing laws compelled the agriculturist to pay more for his coat, he thought that it would be only just that he should be enabled to obtain more for his corn. But this was one of those questions of political economy for which, as I have mentioned in the first Chapter of this memoir, he had little taste; and whatever his personal bias might be, he was prepared at all times to give the subject his most dispassionate consideration. Without such consideration, which he contended had not been given in this instance, and for which they were not in possession of the requisite information, he deprecated what he now considered the party legislation of Government, as he deprecated in after years the means taken to excite and agitate the country on the subject, in order to reverse the policy which, up to that time, had been constantly pursued.

My father's motion to refer the measure to a Special Committee was negatived by a great majority, and the opposition which he supported Lord Grenville in

giving to the Bill in its different stages, was equally unavailing. The principle of protection was then triumphant, and continued to prevail for more than a quarter of a century longer.

The difference of opinion between my father and Lord Grenville, which had been occasioned by the return of Napoleon from Elba, was unfortunately renewed in 1816, with respect to the main provisions of the arrangement by which, after the final overthrow of the French Emperor, it was sought to secure the peace of Europe against future disturbance.

Lord Grenville, impelled by his aversion to the Imperial régime in France, to which, perhaps not without reason, he principally ascribed the troubles in which Europe had been so long involved, was disposed to acquiesce in the policy, now adopted by the Allies, of formally proscribing by treaty all the members of the Bonaparte family from any future share in the Government of France, and of guaranteeing the possession of the French throne to the old dynasty in legitimate succession. This was an amount of interference in the affairs and internal Government of an independent nation, which my father thought utterly at variance with the principles which he had ever been taught to regard as inviolable. 'I cannot consent,' he wrote to Lord Grenville, 'to the doctrine of legitimacy as now 'asserted and acted upon. It seems to me absolutely 'contradictory of the principles of our own revolution; 'and, if true, I do not see how we can deny that our

'present Government originated in treason; and that 'the family now on the throne sit there by an usurped 'title.' Not denying that the 'restoration of the 'lineal heir of Louis XVI.' was a 'desirable event,' with a view to the permanence of peace,—'the 'question,' he said, 'will be with respect to the nature 'of the transaction by which this end has been ac- 'complished, and whether or not it is consistent with 'those principles which I have been taught to consider 'as the true foundation of Government, *really legiti- 'mate*, and of the independence of nations, as well as 'with the obligations of good faith. At the com- 'mencement of the war I expressed, as well as I was 'able, my utter repugnance both to the principle and 'policy of an attempt to force upon the people of 'France a Government to which they were adverse.* 'Such an intention was solemnly and publicly dis- 'claimed, and if the event has been to compel the French 'to submit to a Government which nothing but the 'presence of a foreign force can maintain, and to 'engage this country by a formal guarantee to main- 'tain it by these means, the objections which I 'stated to the attempt, are increased to its accomplish- 'ment, by the breach of the assurances by which the 'people of both countries have been deceived.' . . .

* Lord Grenville thought our right of interference with the immediate Government of France unquestionable under existing circumstances. 'As the war,' he said, 'was necessary, it was just, and the 'conqueror had a right by the law of nations, to impose upon the con- 'quered such terms as would prevent the recurrence of the evil for the 'remedy of which the war was undertaken.'

'Thus far, if I collect your opinions rightly from your 'letter, I fear there must be a wide difference between 'us.' And in contemplation of this difference he reconciled himself to the circumstances which made it impossible for him to be present at the opening of the Session, and deprived him of the opportunity, of which he would otherwise have wished to avail himself, of 'stating his opinions on the principles of the peace, 'and the securities by which it is to be maintained.'

With respect to these principles, and the proposed securities, my father's opinion coincided with that of Lord Grenville. 'I certainly,' he writes, 'consider 'them as highly objectionable on all the grounds 'that you have stated. They leave France in pos-'session of nearly the whole of her former population 'and territory, and they are at the same time so in-'sulting, that no Government of that country, legiti-'mate or illegitimate, Bourbon or other, can avoid 'feeling the most vehement desire to seize the first 'opportunity that may offer, to throw off such a load 'of injury and disgrace. They depend on the union 'of Powers so little bound together by a common 'interest, the danger which immediately threatened 'them being removed, and so likely to be divided by 'clashing pretensions, that even during the negotiations 'of the Congress, they were seen arming and entering 'into defensive alliances against each other; and they 'produce the necessity of a system at home, which, 'however favourable it may be to what I am per-

'suaded is a settled design of the Court, is equally 'dangerous to our Constitution and to our finances.'

And he thus protests against the course which was now adopted (with what success let the events of 1830–31 declare), of fashioning the map of Europe according to the will and supposed interests of certain great Powers, without reference to the wishes or feelings of the people whom they thus arrogated to themselves the right to dispose of. 'There is,' he says, 'a 'principle of the general arrangements essentially con- 'nected with the peace of France, from which I fun- 'damentally dissent, as being inconsistent with any 'true notion of the balance of Europe, and most 'dangerous in practice—I mean the principle of par- 'tition, by which it is supposed peace is to be main- 'tained by rounding and balancing in some propor- 'tion of equal force the dominions of three or four 'great Powers, without any regard, where this supposed 'convenience is interrupted by the possessions of 'weaker States, to the claims of right or justice; I 'am afraid I might add, in some cases, to the obliga- 'tions of treaties, or what is equivalent to them.'

Lord Grenville had argued in the letter to which that from which the preceding extracts have been given was an answer, that it would have been a wise policy upon the conclusion of peace, 'materially to 'abridge the territory of France.' 'The events,' he said, 'not only of the last twenty-five years, but the 'experience of a century and a half,' demonstrating

'that necessity, with a view to the peace and tran-'quillity of Europe.'

In this view my father so far concurred, as to feel, he said, 'the reduction of the power of France to be 'at all times a great object both of British and Euro-'pean policy.' Nor did he deny, 'if it be true that 'we cannot be secure against any Government in 'France out of the line of her ancient kings, that such 'a reduction of territory as would prevent that Power 'from being formidable would, on that ground also, be 'a legitimate object.'

But then he thought that in pursuing such an object it must be clearly shown that it was with reference to our own safety, and, above all, that any arrangements by which it was sought to effect it, 'should be such as 'to relieve us from the necessity of any interference 'in any new change.'

There was another point incidental to the main question of the terms and stipulations of the peace, on the inexpediency and impolicy of which my father and Lord Grenville entirely agreed. They both objected to the continued occupation of France by the allied armies, as a measure that could serve no purpose but to irritate the French nation without necessity, and without any compensating advantage.*

* Lord Grenville also objected to it as affording a pretence for keeping up a large military establishment; a policy which he deprecated as unconstitutional and dangerous in its consequences. He was warmly supported in this objection by Lords Holland and Lansdowne, &c. My father himself was absent when the terms of the peace were discussed in 1816.

'With respect to our conduct in the arrangements 'regarding France,' my father said in the debate on the address on the opening of Parliament in January 1817: 'There was but one of two courses to pursue. 'Either we should have conciliated the goodwill of 'the French people, by abstaining, after the destruc- 'tion of their former Government, against which alone 'we protested that our hostility was directed, from 'any further interference in their internal affairs,—a 'course which I should have preferred, because, in 'my opinion, it would have been more consistent with 'wisdom, liberality, and justice, and therefore our 'true policy (for from true policy, wisdom, liberality, 'and justice are inseparable); or, if it had appeared 'that the people of France were in such a state, and 'that the seeds of disorder were so widely dissemi- 'nated in that unhappy country, as to render her 'dangerous to the general tranquillity, it was open to 'us, having unsheathed the sword and conquered, to 'insist on our rights as conquerors, and to take secu- 'rities for our own safety, and for the reduction of the 'power of France to such a degree as would enable us 'to repose in security. But neither of these courses 'was taken by His Majesty's Government. They 'adopted a third description of proceeding. They 'determined on maintaining a British force in France, 'for the support of the family on the throne; and the 'consequence is, that without having reduced the 'power of that great concentrated empire they have

'generated an implacable spirit of animosity on the 'part of the people.'

With the correspondence between them on the subject of the peace, the political intercourse and connection between my father and Lord Grenville may be said to have terminated. Questions soon arose at home, producing a more important difference between them, which placed them once more, as they had been during Mr. Pitt's first Administration, in direct opposition to each other on points, not merely of policy or temporary inexpediency, but of constitutional principle.

The conclusion of peace had been followed by an unprecedented amount of distress pervading all branches of our national industry—commercial, manufacturing, and agricultural; and this distress had, as usual, led to feelings of discontent, of which a few mischievous and obscure agitators had taken advantage, to excite the people to partial attempts at insurrection, if indeed the disturbances which took place in London, and in some of the Midland counties, may be dignified with such a name.

In the speech from the Throne on opening the Session of 1817, the Regent had alluded to the 'attempts 'which have been made to take advantage of the 'distresses of the country for the purpose of exciting 'a spirit of sedition and violence.' And this had been followed on the 3rd of February 1817, by a message recommending the Houses of Parliament to take into

'their immediate and serious consideration' the information which he had commanded to be laid before them 'respecting certain practices, meetings and combinations in the metropolis, and in different parts of 'the kingdom, evidently calculated to endanger the 'public tranquillity, to alienate the affections of His 'Majesty's subjects from His Majesty's person and 'Government, and to bring into hatred and contempt 'the whole of our laws and constitution.'

The House of Lords responded to this message by the appointment of a Secret Committee * to take the information thus laid before them into consideration, of which Committee Lord Grenville was a member.

On the 18th the Committee made its report, expressing, after detailing at some length the circumstances which had led them to form it, 'their decided 'opinion that further provisions are necessary for the 'preservation of the public peace, and for the protection of interests in which the happiness of every class 'of the community is deeply and equally involved.'

In pursuance of this recommendation, Bills were introduced, with the entire concurrence of Lord Grenville, for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act,—for the more effectual suppression of seditious meetings,—and for punishing any attempts to seduce the troops from their allegiance.

* These Committees were appointed by ballot, which, when the great majority of the House supported the Government, insured their being composed of members devoted to it.

'He felt it his bounden duty,' Lord Grenville said, in the debate on the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, 'to declare that he considered the present situa-'tion of the country to be one of extreme danger, 'and that some extraordinary legislative measures 'were absolutely necessary. . . . . Such being the 'serious conviction of his mind, he felt it to be his 'duty openly to declare his opinion, and to give his 'cordial support for the passing of a Bill for the tem-'porary suspension of the Habeas Corpus Bill.' That Bill was introduced in the House of Lords by Lord Sidmouth (Home Secretary) on the 24th February, and the two other Bills alluded to, in the House of Commons on the same day by Lord Castlereagh.

My father, as he had done in 1794 and 1795, took his stand against the policy now adopted by the Government. In the debate on the address he had already strongly deprecated the extraordinary measures which the expressions in the Regent's speech, with reference to the disturbances which had taken place, led him to anticipate. 'That it is in human nature, when dis-'tressed,' he said, 'to express its discontent, who will 'deny? A free people will sometimes express their 'feelings in a manner not the most guarded. Nobody 'has been more obnoxious to popular assemblies, to 'the friends of Reform, than myself. On no man have 'more severe remarks been made. But, my Lords, 'though they may continue to stigmatise me as a per-'son who has forfeited their confidence, and whose

'moderation is hateful to them, I am far from wishing
'to deal out the same uncharitable measure to them.
'Though I extremely disapprove of their views, which,
'if they could be carried into effect (and I am per-
'suaded they cannot), would prove most pernicious,*
'I believe many of them to have sincerely good in-
'tentions. . . . I should be sorry to believe that there
'existed in any great number of them a disposition to
'overthrow the Constitution. I should therefore most
'deeply regret if what has occurred † should be made
'the pretext for introducing new laws, inconsistent
'with the true spirit of the British Constitution. If any
'individuals should appear to be animated with evil
'designs, that ought not to be advanced as a reason
'for depriving the people of England, who have borne
'the heavy burthens imposed on them with patience
'so exemplary, of their constitutional rights and pri-
'vileges—their best possessions and their best hopes.
'If such be the conduct that your Lordships should
'unfortunately pursue, will not the people with justice
'exclaim—We sought for bread, and are requited with

* Meetings had been very generally held for the purpose of getting up petitions for Parliamentary Reform, of which the general prayer was for universal suffrage and annual Parliaments; and those whose views did not go this extreme length, were denounced, as stated by my father, as no true friends to Reform. In like manner, those who are satisfied with the length to which Reform was carried in 1832, or who desire at most to remedy the defects of that measure, are now denounced as apostates if they oppose the views of those who advocate the ballot, triennial parliaments, and a democratic extension of the franchise!

† Alluding to the attack made on the Regent, as he was returning from opening the Session, when the window of his carriage was broke either by a stone, or a bullet from an air-gun.

'a stone! Will you show them that Parliament is more 'anxious to limit their rights than to relieve their 'wants—to stifle the voice of complaint rather than to 'attend to the prayer of their aggravated distresses?'

My father did not object to the reference of the subject to a Select Committee. 'Undoubtedly,' he said, on that proposition being made on the 4th of February, 'it was the duty of Ministers to communi-'cate any information they might have received of 'practices threatening danger to the Constitution, 'to Parliament; and they could not do so in a more 'proper manner, than by adopting the course which 'had been pursued on similar occasions.' But he regretted that any such necessity should have arisen, and could not, he said, but think it 'a most 'unfortunate circumstance, a most lamentable neces-'sity, that at this period of distress and misery, when 'no one measure of reduction or retrenchment has 'been carried into effect, . . . a measure should be 'proposed which, there is too much reason to appre-'hend, may lead to some invasion or infringe-'ment of the people's rights.' He repeated the ad-juration of the Ministers, that 'their Lordships would 'proceed to the inquiry without favour, without par-'tiality, and without fear.' 'Or if,' he added, 'fear 'should mingle with their deliberations, with at least 'as much fear and apprehension of weakening and 'impairing the liberties of the people, as of injuring 'the Constitution.'

When the Committee made its report, and the Government proceeded, in accordance with its recommendation, to introduce their repressive measures, he objected strongly to the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, proposed by Lord Sidmouth, on the ground that no sufficient case of necessity had been made out. 'He did not wish,' he said, 'to underrate 'the danger that might exist. He could have no 'interest in doing so. Whatever of rank or of pro- 'perty he possessed, he was anxious, like every other 'man, to transmit unimpaired to his children; and if 'the schemes mentioned in the report of the Com- 'mittee were capable of being carried into effect, he 'could not be so foolish as not to know that he must 'be amongst the victims.' He admitted, indeed, the necessity of granting to Government such a power as they now asked, on extraordinary emergencies, but only on such emergencies. 'If,' he said, 'they had 'it at all times it would be found too strong for 'freedom; while, on the other hand, if they were 'without it in cases of extreme urgency and danger, 'there would be no safety for the Throne, the Con- 'stitution, or the country.' He did not, however, now believe the danger to be 'of that imminent 'nature, which the Ministers of the Crown would have 'the House to believe,' and which would alone justify such an infringement of the public liberties. The danger, such as it was, might, he was convinced, be 'effectually met and guarded against by the enact-

'ments already existing. . . . Fortified and en-
'trenched as they were,' he said, 'up to the very
'teeth, by the influence of the Crown, and by a large
'military force, he would ask had they no other
'securities still? Let them look at their laws. There
'were enactments which restrained the liberties of the
'Press—which regulated popular meetings—which
'punished illegal oaths—and yet they came to ask
'for a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act!'

Lord Grenville and his friends now supporting the Government, a very small minority voted with my father in opposition to the Government policy. The second reading of the Bill was carried by a majority, including proxies, of one hundred and fifty to thirty-five, and it was then committed, reported, read a third time and passed, on the same day.

The measures introduced at the same time in the House of Commons were afterwards carried with equal facility through the House of Lords, but my father took no part in their discussion.

But the repressive measures adopted by the Government did not stop here. On the 27th of March Lord Sidmouth issued his famous circular letter to the Lords-Lieutenant of counties, acquainting them with the opinion given by the law officers, that a justice of the peace might issue a warrant for the apprehension of any person charged with selling, or in any way publishing, blasphemous or seditious libels, and might compel him to give bail to answer the charge.

This letter, and a copy of the opinion of the law officers having been laid on the table of the House, on the motion of my father, he brought it under consideration on the 12th of May, in a speech of which Lord Holland said that he 'believed an abler legal 'argument never had been delivered either at the Bar 'or from the Bench.' Lord Erskine also said that he 'had prepared himself to enter fully upon the legal argu- 'ment, but it would now be pedantry to do so, as the 'able and convincing speech of his noble friend had 'received no answer.' Even the Lord Chancellor (Eldon) observed that though he could not agree with Lord Grey, 'he had no difficulty in declaring that he 'had argued the case with such ability as held him in 'some degree of check.'

This speech, the longest my father ever made, and which occupied four hours in the delivery, was one of the few that was ever corrected by himself, and was separately printed. Its length makes it impossible to give more here than a short summary of it; nor, perhaps, consisting, as it does, for the most part of an elaborate legal argument, would lengthened extracts possess much interest for the general reader.

He first argued against the legality of the power asserted in this letter, supporting his argument by the opinions of our greatest law authorities, which all went to show that a justice of the peace had never been held to possess the power now claimed for him.

Next he showed the dangerous tendency of such a power in cases of alleged libel, even if it should legally exist. 'In all the varieties of writings,' he said, 'which might constitute that offence, what is more 'difficult to be decided than the question of their 'guilt or innocence? What more exposed to the in- 'fluence of undue motives in its decision? It has 'been formerly stated by some of the most eminent 'persons in the profession of the law, nay, by almost 'all of them, to be so nice and difficult a question that 'it could not be left safely even to a special jury, that 'they were only to find the fact of publication, and 'that the criminality of the writing as a question of 'law, was exclusively for the decision of the Court. 'This, my Lords, was long contended for, and long 'acted upon as law, till, happily for the freedom 'of the Press, and for the liberty of the country 'of which the Press is the great palladium, by the 'perseverance of my noble and learned friend near 'me (Lord Erskine), and by the exertions of the 'man whom in public life I most loved and ad- 'mired (Mr. Fox), whom I had nearly called one 'of the greatest lawyers, but who certainly was one 'of the greatest men the country ever produced, that 'principle was at length exploded, and by the Libel 'Bill it was at last established, that in prosecutions 'for libel, both the law and the fact were within the 'province of the jury, and to be decided by them. 'But, my Lords, what avails this just and beneficial

'statute, what security is there for the freedom of the 'Press, or the liberty of the subject, if, whilst you 'have imposed this salutary restraint upon the judges 'in trials for libel, you give to justices of the peace, 'before trial, a right to decide that difficult question, 'and to commit to prison (in many cases, perhaps, to 'inflict a severer punishment than the Court upon 'conviction would adjudge) upon a charge which, after 'all, may turn out to have had no foundation but in 'the false interpretation of words perfectly innocent, 'by the justice before whom the charge was brought? 'I cannot, my Lords, I will not, believe that you can 'sanction the exercise of such a power. That it is not 'law, I think I have already shown. But if it is law 'your duty calls upon you to lose no time in altering 'it. With respect to offences over which this au- 'thority is acknowledged, it is ordinarily a simple and 'intelligible fact, of which the magistrate has to judge. '. . . But upon libel, where the whole guilt or inno- 'cence of the offence must depend upon the intention, 'and must be inferred from the construction and the 'inuendoes, often difficult for the most impartial and 'unbiassed person to decide, where the prejudices, 'interests, or passions of the justice before whom the 'charge is brought, are so likely to influence his 'interpretation of the words; where in political or 'religious libels, more especially, his particular opi- 'nions and attachments must unavoidably have so 'great a sway: in cases of this sort, to place upon

'the charge of any common informer the personal 'liberty of every writer and publisher on politics, 'religion, or law, or any other public question, the un- 'fettered discussion of which is of the very essence 'and principle of a free Government, at the discretion 'of magistrates mixing in all the contests of the time, 'and partaking on one side or the other, in all the 'heats and prejudices which personal or party interests 'engender;—if such be the power of the magistrates, 'and if this be law, where, I ask, are all the boasted 'securities of our independence and freedom?'

Having next shown that in the absence of any statute conferring such a power on justices of the peace, there was also no such ancient and continued practice as could form a plea in its justification, he proceeded to argue against the act of the Secretary of State in sending this circular, as an unconstitutional interference with the magistracy in the exercise of their judicial functions.

'It is, my Lords,' he said, 'amongst the very first 'principles of a free Government, that there should 'be an insurmountable line of separation between the 'executive and the judicial authorities,—that the 'latter should be kept independent of the former: 'and hitherto any interference of a Minister of the 'Crown with the administration of justice, has been 'considered as a political offence of so serious a ten- 'dency to the liberty and security of the subject, that 'at other times it would have called down the indig-

'nation of Parliament on the head of the offender. I 'say, my Lords, this has been such an interference,— 'a direct interference, not with the ministerial, but 'with the judicial duties of the magistrates,—by in- 'structing them in what manner they are to administer 'the law with respect to a particular class of offences; 'the consequence of which is, to subject to the power 'of arrest, and imprisonment, if bail cannot be pro- 'cured, every author, printer and publisher,—nay, 'perhaps, every possessor, of any writing which, in 'their judgment, they may deem a libel.' *

My father's opposition to this proceeding of the Minister was as fruitless as that which he had offered to the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and the motion with which he concluded, for the production of the case submitted to the law officers, on which the opinion was founded by which Lord Sidmouth justified his letter, was negatived by seventy-five to nineteen.

It does not appear that there was any formal declaration of the dissolution of the political connection between my father and Lord Grenville.† But the very

* In the Session of 1818, Lord Erskine introduced a Bill to prevent arrests by justices of the peace for libel, before indictment found; but it was thrown out on the second reading by a majority of thirty-one to thirteen.

† In the Memoirs of the Courts of George III. and the Regency, published by the present Duke of Buckingham, no letters are given for the years 1815, 1816, and 1817, most important years to omit; but it would appear from those published for the year 1818, in which great anxiety is shown on the part of some of Lord Grenville's friends to form a 'third Party,' (evidently as a step towards joining the Government,) and from the disapprobation expressed on one occasion by Lord Grenville of the reception, by Lord Temple, of a communication from

different view now taken by them of the condition of the country, and of the measures which that condition rendered expedient, led virtually to that result. While my father (as has been seen) raised his voice loudly against a course of policy which he considered no less impolitic than unconstitutional, Lord Grenville supported the Government in all their coercive measures. And it was probably in contemplation of that separation which such a difference rendered inevitable between the parties that had hitherto composed the Opposition, that the latter, in supporting the Bill proposed by Ministers in June 1817, for prolonging the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act,* spoke of the probability of that being 'almost the last occasion on 'which he should have to claim the attention of their 'lordships.'

The conduct, indeed, of those who were now eagerly pressing the discussion of Parliamentary Reform, and promoting meetings for the purpose of getting up petitions for that object, at which both the language used, and the views advocated, were often of extreme violence, was such, as, with Lord Grenville's known opinions on such subjects, made his further co-operation with the Opposition impossible.

Lord Liverpool, that though he (Lord Grenville) had withdrawn from any active part in Parliament the connexion with the Whig party had never been formally dissolved.

* In the first instance the Habeas Corpus Act had only been suspended till the 1st of July. In June, a second Bill was introduced to continue the suspension.

My father himself, though disapproving strongly of the coercive measures to which the Government had recourse in order to meet this agitation, or rather the consequences which they chose to attribute to it, was as much opposed as Lord Grenville himself could be, to the views advocated by the Ultra-Reformers. I have already quoted at some length a speech which he made in 1810,* in moving an address to the King on the state of the nation, in which he disclaimed all participation in the views of the so-called Radical Reformers. He now repeated, in presenting a petition from the Lord Mayor and Corporation of London, on the 18th of September 1817, praying, amongst other things, for a Reform of Parliament, that he most fully 'disclaimed the project of annual parliaments and 'universal suffrage. His noble friend (Lord Holland) 'had shown, to the conviction of that House, that such 'doctrines never were acknowledged by the Constitu-'tion. That they never would become part of the 'Constitution he most sincerely hoped. . . . . In his 'conscience he believed that their realization would 'not only be unattended with any salutary or beneficial 'improvement, but would lead to the subversion of all 'that this nation, over every other part of the world, 'enjoyed.'

But he was not prepared to 'impute to every man 'who held such doctrines, improper or sinister designs. '. . . It was natural, he felt, that the people should 'look, under the pressure of unparalleled distress, to

* See Chapter V.

'every measure likely to obtain redress.' And though 'he could not conceal from himself that in the very 'anxiety for that redress, they were ready to subscribe 'to plans and systems of Reform without particularly 'weighing the specific merits or applicability of such 'propositions,' still less was he prepared to concur, on that account, or on account of the disturbances of which it was said the language used at the Reform meetings had been the cause, in the coercive measures now proposed by Ministers and supported by Lord Grenville. If mischievous men took advantage of the existing distress to encourage irritation, and used the opportunity afforded by the meetings in favour of Reform to preach revolutionary doctrines, 'the suspension 'of the Habeas Corpus Act was not the proper remedy 'for the discontents that prevailed.' Nor was it, he thought, either politic or just, 'because there were a 'few designing persons ready to take advantage of the 'distressed, to urge them to acts of violence, that the 'whole people of England were to be deprived of their 'liberties, and those discontents aggravated, which a 'wise Government would endeavour to remove.'*

The separation between my father and Lord Grenville was thus, from the commencement of these discussions, complete; and the united and powerful party which had constituted the Opposition for the last ten years, under their joint leadership, was thenceforward irrevocably broken up.

* Speech on the renewal of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, June 1817.

CHAPTER VIII.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

In the preceding chapters I have attempted to give some idea of the principles on which my father's political opinions were founded, and by which his public conduct was invariably guided. My object has been less to vindicate their truth and justice (though entertaining myself the most implicit faith in both) than to show that, such as they were, they were the honest convictions of his mind; that, as such, being earnestly and sincerely adopted, no motive of self-interest—no consideration of party advantage—no desire for office, such as the vulgar idea is too apt to impute to public men—not even the nobler ambition to obtain power for the sake of the good it might enable him to effect, could induce him, for a single instant, to abandon or even to compromise them.

To the possession of office he was at all times not only indifferent but indisposed; and he ever contemplated the possibility of the course of events leading to his being called upon to take a share in the Government of the country, as a sacrifice which his duty

might, under certain circumstances, render imperative; but still as a sacrifice of that domestic comfort and happiness which no man perhaps appreciated more highly, or clung to more fondly, than himself.

The continued existence of successive Tory Administrations, he regarded, under the circumstances of the times, as a national misfortune; and he joined eagerly and zealously in the Opposition which had for its object the substitution of a Government based on more liberal principles. But great as, in his opinion, would be the national advantage of the establishment of a Liberal Administration in power, that advantage, he also thought, might be too dearly purchased if attained at any, even the slightest, sacrifice of character. Nor was it enough, as regarded himself, that there should be no real abandonment of political principles for the sake of place; there must not be even such an apparent compromise of it, as might lead the public to doubt for a moment the purity of the motives on which he had acted. He held the character of a public man to be a national property that must not be lightly trifled with; nor could it, in his idea, be damaged in any degree, without corresponding injury to the public interests.

It was this feeling that led to the interruption of the various negotiations for changes in the Administration which I have already noticed. It cannot be denied that, in acting upon this conviction, the bulk of the party did not always go with him; and on more than

one occasion the unbending spirit, which alone stood in the way of his accession to power, was loudly condemned by many of its members, who could ill understand his high principle of action, and who could only feel resentment against one to whom they attributed the disappointment of their hopes.

I am aware that the passing of the Reform Bill has been urged as a reason why such elevated notions of the obligations of a public man, should in latter times have apparently ceased to operate, and that a Ministry is not only thought to be justified, but to be called upon by duty, to adhere to office after defeats which in other times would have been considered to render immediate resignation the only course compatible with a due regard to character and honour. I cannot, however, concur in this opinion, or join with those who attribute to the Reform measure the weakened authority of successive Administrations. To my mind it seems more correct to trace the general disrepute into which all Governments have undeniably fallen, and the existing want of confidence in the honesty of our public men, to the abandonment of that high principle, which, as it prevented my father from accepting office without full power to carry his own policy into effect, would never have allowed him to retain it, by the constant sacrifice of his opinions to the ever-increasing exigencies of a party.

There can be no doubt, however, that if the acquisition or retention of power is to be the first object of

a public man, this is not the way to secure it; and my father himself affords a striking proof, that such principles of action can only result in almost perpetual exclusion from office, and in the consequent loss of opportunity to effect much good, that, with a less unbending spirit—with a lower standard of public virtue—he would years before have been in a position to accomplish. To this it is sufficient to answer that it *ought* not to be so; and had others been actuated by similar high notions of political honour and consistency—had they made, as he did, the power to give effect to their principles a sine quâ non condition of their acceptance of office; for instance, as I have more than once observed already, and must again repeat, had those who professed to share his belief in the vital importance to the empire of the settlement of the Catholic Question, made that settlement, as he did, a condition of their forming part of the Government—he would not have had to wait a quarter of a century before occupying his proper place in the councils of his country; nor would a generation have grown up in Ireland, nursed and reared in a system of habitual agitation, which could not be expected to end with the cause whence it first sprang, and which went far to neutralize the good effects anticipated from the great measure of justice and conciliation that had been so unfortunately delayed.

I propose in the present Chapter to give a short notice of my father in his domestic life; though, per-

haps, there are few men so distinguished in public, whose life in private was so devoid of all incident which could render its lengthened description generally interesting. Its even and unvarying tenour might almost be termed monotonous, if monotony did not seem to imply ennui and weariness—feelings from which no man's daily life was ever more completely free. Each portion of the day had its appropriate occupation; none was mis-spent or trifled away, and between the well-regulated hours devoted to business or study, and those given to his family, his life passed on, as I have said, in an even and unvarying tenour, but one singularly happy in its course.

It would be impossible in language to give any adequate idea of the spirit of gentleness and affection that marked all his intercourse with his family and familiar friends. Nor shall I attempt it, farther than to say, that no one was ever endowed in a higher degree with those domestic qualities, which insure to their possessor the attachment of children, friends, and dependents. High-minded as were the principles, and pure the motives, that marked his public career, it was in private—in the every-day relations of family life—that the whole beauty of his character became most apparent. But he was not demonstrative by nature, and a certain reserve of manner in general society, led the world to judge him most erroneously. The most indulgent of men towards others—the most humble and modest in his judgment of himself—has been represented as haughty and overbearing! one

whose heart was overflowing with feelings of kindness and sympathy for all around him, has been described as ill-tempered and unforgiving! I shall be disappointed, however, if the extracts which I give in the course of this memoir, from his letters to my mother, Mr. Fox, &c., do not lead those who read them to estimate him more correctly.

I know little of my father's life, when not attending his Parliamentary duties, before his marriage. It is probable, however, that much of his time was spent either in the North, or with his father, who then commanded in the South of England.

In 1794, as I have mentioned in the first Chapter, he married the daughter of Mr., afterwards Lord, Ponsonby, of Bishop's Court, in the County of Kildare, whose family had long taken a lead in the party opposed to the Government in Ireland. He was thus brought into intimate relations with the most distinguished of the Irish Liberals.

On his marriage he took a small house in Hertford Street, May Fair, where he lived during the Sessions of '95, '96, '97, and '98, spending the summer of the three former at Howick, the seat of his uncle, Sir Harry, and his own future residence during many long and happy years; and that of '98, partly in Hertfordshire, and partly with Lord Frederick Cavendish, at Holker, in Lancashire.*

* My mother's grandmother, Lady Betty Ponsonby, was sister of William, third Duke of Devonshire; and this relationship had produced the greatest intimacy between the Ponsonby and Cavendish families.

In 1797 my father was twice called down to Brighton, where my grandfather and grandmother were then living. First, on account of the illness of the former; and, again, on the distressing errand of communicating to them the intelligence of his brother's death, Colonel Thomas Grey, who died in command of a regiment at the Cape of Good Hope, after a lingering illness. I mention these visits to Brighton, though well aware how little of interest their mention can possess for strangers to himself and his family, because they give me the opportunity of quoting extracts from letters of his to my mother, which show his character better than anything I could myself say.

'Though I hate leaving you even for a minute,' he writes to my mother, on the first of these occasions, 'I 'am very glad I came here, and I think it will be some 'relief to them. I am sorry to tell you that I think 'my father looks very indifferently. He has not been 'out of the house these two months, and some time 'ago had a spitting of blood.' . . . And the next day he adds: 'I cannot help wishing that I had 'brought you here and remained some time, as I think 'I might have been able to do my father some good. 'Even these fine days have not tempted him to go 'out, and he is so low that it is quite distressing to 'see him. I am sure you will feel for my poor 'mother, who has everybody else, as well as herself 'to support. I think my grandmother is the best of 'the family both in health and spirits. When I 'express a wish to stay here, if my other avocations

'would permit it, I assure you it is only from the 'motive of doing good to my father: I never saw a 'place I should so much dislike to live at for any 'time.'

In April, when he again went down with the news of his brother's death, he writes: 'This has been a 'sad scene of affliction, as you may too well conceive; 'for though we ought all to have been in some degree 'prepared for the loss, yet it was impossible not to 'feel the shock which the certainty of it must occasion. 'My father and mother are both as well as I could 'expect them to be. Indeed, the fortitude of both, 'under many severe trials, but none so severe as this, 'to which I have seen them exposed, cannot be ex- 'ceeded. I think our coming here has been of great 'use, and I hope we shall stay at least till Tuesday, 'though I cannot help regretting every moment I am 'kept from you.' . . . 'We had a most prosperous 'journey, and arrived here at half-past eight. During 'the latter part of it, I cannot describe to you what I 'felt in the reflection that I was carrying such un- 'happy intelligence to persons at the time, probably, 'quite unconscious of it, perhaps engaged in a pleasant 'party, and without a thought of the misery which 'was approaching them.'

The following day he adds: 'We all continue as 'well as you could wish us, with the exception of the 'most material, I mean my father and mother. They 'are neither of them well; particularly the former, 'who is sadly reduced by his last illness, and this

'most heavy loss appears to press upon them more 'heavily, as they think more of it. Indeed, it is 'impossible to recall to one's mind all poor Tom's 'amiable qualities, without feeling, if possible, still 'more from reflection.'

In 1799 my father gave up his house in Hertford Street, and took one on Ham Common, where he lived for the next two years. The drawback to this situation was its distance from London, which made it impossible for him to return at night after attending the House of Commons. Thus it frequently happened that he was detained in town for the whole week; and this at a time when the state of the neighbourhood was such, as naturally to fill him with anxiety on account of his family. Nearly every house on the Common, I believe, except his own, had been broken into while he lived there. My mother, however, passed much of the time of his unavoidable absences with Lord Frederick Cavendish, at Twickenham Park.

In November 1799, my father's brother, William, who had been severely wounded in Holland, having been landed at Yarmouth, in Norfolk, he accompanied my grandfather and grandmother to that place, which I again mention only to introduce the following extracts from his letters written on that occasion.

'We arrived,' he writes on the 21st, 'yesterday 'evening between six and seven, and found poor 'William as well, I think I may say better, than I 'expected. . . . I have had a conversation with 'Mr. Tudor, the surgeon, who gives us every reason

'to hope that his life will be safe, though the limb is 'still in danger. Indeed, the probability is that he 'will lose it, and in the most favourable event he will 'have a stiff joint.'* . . . 'We have got very 'tolerable lodgings exactly opposite to the house he 'is in, and where I shall remain for some days. My 'father and mother go away on Saturday. On this 'unfortunate occasion my being so long and so far 'separated from you is not the least of my grievances. 'I cannot at present fix any time to return, and 'though I am sure that my absence is no less painful 'to you than it is to me, yet I am also sure that you 'will not wish me to come away, whilst I can be of 'any use to poor William.'

On the 22nd he says: 'My father and mother have 'determined to stay till to-morrow; which I am very 'glad of, as it appears to gratify poor William.' And he thus describes the appearance of some of the Russian soldiers who, after their defeat at the Helder, had been brought to Yarmouth in our fleet: 'I have seen 'some of the Russians, and do not at all wonder at 'their being beaten. My father cannot get over his 'astonishment at their appearance. They really are 'not human, and their filth is shocking to the greatest 'degree. Those that are landed, to be carried to the 'hospital, are immediately washed from head to foot in 'a warm bath, their heads are shaved, and new clothes 'given to them to prevent contagion. Such parts of 'their own clothes as can be rendered wholesome and

* This was the result.

'useful by washing, are reserved for them, and the 'rest are burned. But it is quite impossible to give 'you any adequate idea of their sordid, miserable ap- 'pearance. The convicts in the galleys in France, or 'in the hulks in England, come the nearest to them 'in general resemblance and dress. Most of them are 'in rags, squalid and disgusting to the sight, or wrapped 'up in a large loose white great-coat, of a texture 'between a blanket and cloth, which is tied by a 'string or dirty pocket-handkerchief round the waist. 'In short, you would take them to be anything but 'soldiers.

'Your letter, which I received yesterday,' he writes on the 24th, 'has been the greatest comfort I have 'experienced since I came here. The assurances that 'you are all well, and that my sweet children are 'well, make me most happy. There is, however, one 'little sentence for which I have a great mind to 'quarrel with you. I should do so most seriously, 'if I thought you could really imagine that any- 'thing could make up to me the want of you and 'my children. Riches—I mean in moderation, for I 'am not sure that great possessions do not bring with 'them as much embarrassment as pleasure—riches 'in moderation might add to our comforts, but the 'want of them, I trust, will never destroy our happi- 'ness. Look at all your rich acquaintance, and tell 'me whether the situation of any of them is really and 'intrinsically as happy as ours. I will answer the 'question for myself, and in doing so I think I may

'answer it for you too, that there is no creature upon 'earth with whom I would change—no, not even with 'Bonaparte.'

In December of the same year he writes from Southhill, where he was passing two or three days with Mr. Whitbread and his sister: 'I shall certainly 'not protract my stay here beyond Tuesday, but I 'am afraid I shall not be able to see you on that day. 'I promised to dine with my father. I shall therefore 'sleep in town, and be with you at dinner on Wed- 'nesday. I hope you will stay at Twickenham till 'that day. How I do long to return to Tacitus and 'our own comfortable fire! Do you? I must now 'snub you a little. Do you know that in the letter 'you wrote yesterday there is no notice whatever— 'no, not a single word—of my darling children! Your 'letter of the day before says they were well, and I 'am quite easy about them, but I like to hear you 'speak of them, and tell me that they sometimes 'appear to recollect me. God in heaven bless them!'

Whenever my father was away from home he never omitted, however his time might be otherwise engaged, to write a daily letter to my mother, giving her a full account of everything that had occurred of either public or private interest. And throughout this correspondence there breathes the same spirit of fond affection for his family, the same yearning after the comfort and happiness of his domestic life, the same impatience of its interruption.

In July 1800, he writes, during a short visit by

himself to the Duke of Bedford at Woburn: 'I did 'not find so large a party as I expected. It con- 'sists at present of only Fox, Lord Robert (Spen- 'cer), Fitzpatrick, Lord John Townshend, Francis '(Sir Philip), Dudley North, Richardson, and myself. 'Sheridan and Adair are expected to-day, and Hare 'to-morrow. Pleasant as the people are with whom 'I am living, and comfortable as this place is, they do 'not make up to me for your absence and that of my 'sweet children. They are so necessary to me that 'I cannot enjoy as I ought to do society anywhere 'from home. I should here if anywhere, for the style 'of the house is the best imaginable, and I never felt 'so completely at my ease and comfortable, under 'any roof that was not my own. I feel ungrateful 'when I form a wish beyond what I possess, for who 'ever possessed such real blessings? Indeed, if I 'were at liberty to make my way of living conform 'to my situation, I feel confident that I should have 'no regrets to disturb my happiness. A small com- 'fortable house, a little land to afford me occupation 'out of doors, are all that are necessary to me; but if 'we were only rich enough to entertain occasionally 'at home a small society with comfort, I should not have 'a wish ungratified.'—Such a society, in fact, as he was then enjoying at Woburn, composed of men no less distinguished by their abilities and patriotism in public life, than by the genial qualities which threw so great a charm over their intercourse in private.

Of the foremost man amongst them all, to whose memory he clung with the most devoted affection till the latest hour of his own life, he thus speaks on the same occasion: 'Fox is in the highest spirits. 'It is quite delightful to see such a man in the midst 'of a society which he appears to like, so unas- 'suming, good-humoured, and cheerful. Everything 'seems to be a source of enjoyment to him, and I 'hardly know which to envy most, his amiable dis- 'position or his unrivalled talents. When I descend 'from admiring him to think of myself, how I 'sicken at the contrast! He is enthusiastic about 'poetry, and admires Spenser as much as we do. 'You may remember how cheap Francis appeared 'to hold us for this taste at Woolbeding.* He is not 'stout enough to disparage Spenser as much as he 'did then, before Fox, but I assure you his opinions 'on the subject, as far as he has ventured to express 'them, have gained him no applause.'

'I gave you an account,' he writes the next day, 'of the party yesterday; and though the society is gay, 'cheerful, and amusing, there is no great variety of 'events and occupations which would afford you any 'interest. We sit up rather too late, and dine too 'early, considering the hours we keep; but otherwise 'nothing can be pleasanter than the manner in which 'the day passes. The room we inhabit is the library,

* The seat of Lord Robert Spencer, near Midhurst, in Sussex, and a frequent resort of Mr. Fox and the leading Whigs.

'where we lounge over books, or join in conversation, 'as suits our inclination. In this manner the morn- 'ing, or the greater part of it, passes, with perhaps a 'sauntering walk in the pleasure grounds, or the 'tennis-court, where Fox and Lord Robert generally 'play for an hour or two. We dine at four, and gene- 'rally walk out after coffee; after which there is a party 'of good players, from which I am excluded, at whist, 'in a room which opens into the library, where the 'rest of the party amuse themselves as in the morning. 'Supper is served in another adjoining room about 'eleven; after which we generally sit up pretty late. 'The library is the most delightful room you ever saw. 'All the castles I have been used to build about 'Howick are fading away very fast, and, to say the 'truth, I wish I could divest myself of all remaining 'partiality to it. The distance will certainly not only 'be a great inconvenience on account of the education 'of our dear children, but will make it almost impos- 'sible to have any society that is pleasant, which God 'knows the county itself cannot afford.'

But Howick was soon to become his permanent residence; and instead of divesting himself of his existing partiality to it, that partiality deepened into an attachment to the place which has been rarely equalled.

He had only taken the house on Ham Common for two years, and he thus writes during a short absence in London during the spring of 1801: 'We must soon

'begin to think seriously of some shelter after the 1st 'of May, which approaches very fast. What I should 'like best, would be to take a house in town for a 'couple of months: but I fear we could not afford one 'which would hold us and the children with any com- 'fort; and besides, the expense of moving twice is an 'important consideration. I sometimes think it would 'be a good plan, if I could borrow the money, to buy 'some small place with a few acres of ground. The 'interest would be less than the rent we must pay for 'any hired place. A little ground would assist very 'much in our housekeeping, and being our own, it 'might furnish us with some occupation. Should 'better times arrive, which might make us wish to 'change, we could not lose by selling it, and if, which 'I think most probable, for the sake of being nearer 'town for the education of our children, and for other 'reasons, we should find it prudent to remain, the im- 'provements which, even in a little way, we might 'now carry on, would serve to attach us to the place, 'and contribute to our future comfort. I am much 'inclined to something of the sort, for I really am 'quite tired of this uncertain and unsettled life, with- 'out any hope, and without any occupation.'

His yearning was now, as it always was, for the comfort and happiness of *home*.

This question of home was settled for him in the happiest manner. The circumstances under which he anticipates, in the above letter, a possible desire to

change any residence in which they might now establish themselves, were doubtless those attending his probable succession to Howick on the death of his uncle. But the kindness of that uncle, by allowing him to fix himself there at once, made such future change unnecessary.

June had found him still uncertain as to his future plans; but in the course of that month he thus writes to my mother, then at Lord Frederick Cavendish's at Twickenham:—

'I have no news to tell you but such as will I think 'be equally surprising and pleasing to you. Sir Harry 'has, in the handsomest way possible, consented to our 'going to Howick, and to our living there, on our own 'account, in future. I have only a moment to save 'post, and must defer particulars till I see you to-'morrow. He seems quite impatient that we should 'set out, and thought I fixed a very late day when I 'talked of the middle of July. You must begin soon 'to make your preparations, and, above all, prepare 'yourself to become a notable farmer's wife, for we 'shall be very poor, but, I hope, very comfortable.'

I think it was on the 17th of July, 1801, that he arrived at Howick with his family; and on the anniversary of that day, forty-four years later, he there breathed his last! During the whole of this period, when not attending his Parliamentary duties, and with the exception of three winters passed in Devonshire for my mother's health, and of the few years

when he was afterwards in office, by far the greatest portion of each year was here spent. How he loved the place,—with what reluctance he at all times left it,—and with what delight he ever returned to it, his letters abundantly testify! And had he not a right to love a place, as it may in truth be called, of his own creation? Where, with the exception of the few old trees about the house and garden, and in the glen leading to the sea, there is scarcely one which is not of his own planting,—where there is not a walk or an improvement but of his laying out,—and where he could look round on the comfort and happiness of all about him, with the proud satisfaction of feeling how much he had himself contributed to them.

A minute description of Howick, its house and grounds, would be of little interest to strangers. Yet any account of my father's private life would be incomplete, without some notice of the place to which he was so fondly attached, and with which his whole life, from this time forward, was so completely identified.

Situated about a mile from the sea, on the eastern coast of Northumberland,—some thirty miles, by the road, south of Berwick, and forty north of Newcastle,—Howick, though it has no pretensions to be classed amongst the fine places of England, and though the surrounding country has little beauty to recommend it, yet may be confidently asserted to be, as it now exists, the creation of my father, one of the most comfort-

able and enjoyable residences to be found in the kingdom.

The house stands on the north side of a little brook, which issuing from woods, mostly of my father's own planting, to the west, makes a tolerably wide sweep directly in its front, and then again disappearing between high banks, winds its way through a pretty glen for about a mile and a half to the sea. Down this glen, which is wooded on both sides to the very beach, winds, with the windings of the stream in a south-easterly direction, a most delightful walk, which, after emerging on the sea-shore, turns to the north, and following the indentures of the coast, just above the rocks, of which it here almost entirely consists, is continued for another mile and a half, to the northern boundary of the estate.

Other walks there were—broad, sociable, enjoyable walks—about the gardens, and up the brook, and through the woods to the west of the house, till they extended in different directions to an aggregate length of little less than seven miles—all laid out by my father himself—formed and kept with the greatest care, and from the nature of their formation, dry in a few minutes after the heaviest rain. But the walk down the glen, known as the 'long walk,' and that along the sea-shore, have seemed to me to deserve especial mention, not only as giving in fact a character to the place, but as the round which each Sunday in succession, weather permitting (and it must indeed have been

a bad day that kept us at home), my father would take with his family. If it is difficult to exaggerate the beauty and variety of the sea and coast views that met you at every turn on the sea walk (so was that along the shore called), it is still more difficult adequately to describe my father's enjoyment of them, or the happiness of those who accompanied him.

But a description of the every-day life at Howick in its even and unbroken course, the morning occupations, the afternoon rides, the evening readings,—though to my father's family it might recall the recollections of a childhood and youth of more than common happiness, reminding them of some particular instance of the affectionate indulgence of him to whom they owed it, yet to the general reader such a detail might appear monotonous and uninteresting. I shall not, therefore, attempt it.

When I speak of a childhood and youth of more than common happiness, I do not speak too strongly. Rarely indeed, if ever, has the grown man or woman had reason to look back upon that early period of life with such fond recollection. The hours for study were strictly regulated; but, out of those hours, it was my father's system to leave his children to enjoy themselves in their own fashion. Uncontrolled by the presence of either governess, or tutor, or servant, they were free,—subject only to the condition of observing the prescribed hour of return,—to roam at will over the country; and this almost from their very earliest years. This freedom, he justly thought, not only

tended to their health and happiness, but also taught them to be self-dependent, accustoming them early to act and think for themselves. He thus explains, in 1804, the views he entertained on the education of children generally, and on which he acted with regard to his own. 'I am afraid,' he says, 'that —— will ultimately be found rather to have overpowered than improved her children. After all, health is the first object; even for the improvement of the mind, it is the first. For without brisk animal spirits, and a good state of health, there will not in general be very great powers of mind. I know this by woful experience. Then, though adequate instruction is not to be neglected, I am convinced that children may be taught too much as well as too little. To exercise and strengthen faculties by placing them in situations to act and think for themselves, seems to me at least as necessary a part of education, as to teach them what others have thought and done. But on this subject I know we agree.'

Most parents would shudder at the manner in which the freedom thus allowed was exercised; at the distances and places to which the enterprise of the children, thus left to themselves, would often lead them;—and, certainly, considering the nature of the rocks forming the coast at Howick, and over which we clambered at will, it does seem almost like a special protection of Providence, that averted any serious accident.

The increased distance at which my father was now from London, added to the aversion he so constantly expressed for political life. In the first years of his residence at Howick, the expense of the long journey made it impossible for him to move his family, when forced himself to go to town by his Parliamentary duties. This naturally increased his reluctance to leave home, and his correspondence with Mr. Fox, from 1802 to 1806, shows the difficulty with which he was brought up, even in the most important political crises;—and when thus alone in London, his longing desire to return to the happiness of his own domestic circle, almost unfitted him for the business in which he had to engage. Mr. Fox saw this so strongly, that on one occasion, when urging his attendance at the opening of the Session, he writes: 'And now, as you 'have addressed yourself to Mrs. Fox, let me do so 'to Mrs. Grey; and beg of her not to think of letting 'you come alone, or that at least she will follow very 'soon after. God knows, when you are in town 'without her you are unfit for anything, with all your 'thoughts at Howick; and as the time for which your 'stay may be necessary must be uncertain, you will 'both be in a constant fidget and misery.'

My father's answer to this appeal shows the feeling with which he yielded to it: 'I have at last,' he says, 'determined to set out, though most unwillingly. 'Indeed, you cannot conceive what it costs me; and in 'return for the sacrifice I now make, I must stipulate

'that if, towards the end of the Session, I should 'determine to resign my seat, you will not say a word 'against it.'

The whole of 1802 seems to have been passed quietly at Howick;—but the apparent imminence of war with France, and the King's message on the subject, of the 8th of March 1803, would not permit my father any longer to disregard Mr. Fox's urgent entreaties for his attendance. 'Another fine day,' he writes, from the road on his way up, 'but a most melancholy 'one to me! Have you been riding, or planting 'cuttings of laurel? Whatever doing, I hope you 'have been well, and as happy as you can be. I try 'to figure to myself all your occupations through the 'day. When shall I hear from you?'

He was detained in London on this occasion till the 31st of May. Unable to leave town while the question of peace or war was still in suspense, or till the termination of the discussions that followed the renewal of hostilities, he had borne this long separation from his family with ever-increasing impatience, aggravated by the discomfort of the lodging in which he lived. 'I 'feel quite provoked,' he writes, on the 4th of April, 'at having been taken away so soon. It will make it 'more difficult for them to move me another time.' '. . . God bless you. Kiss the dear children, and 'tell me what I can get that would please them most, 'and at the same be useful to them.'

'I am quite worn out,' he repeats, on the 3rd of

May, 'with the state of uncertainty in which things 'still remain, and with vexation at having been so 'long absent from you, and literally for nothing. It 'must end this week, however; and though I cannot 'now fix the 7th of May for setting out, I think no-'thing can detain me beyond Saturday, or, at furthest, 'Monday se'nnight. I think the communication pro-'mised by Addington will probably be made on 'Friday, and the debate on it take place on Monday 'next, and if I allow the rest of the week for any dis-'cussions that may follow, I think I shall do very 'handsomely. As to negotiations for office, I do not 'see the least possibility of any.' . . . 'The whole 'situation of public affairs presents on every side so 'many unpleasant circumstances, with so little tempta-'tion to any honourable ambition, that my disposition 'to withdraw myself from it entirely increases every 'hour . . . We have had a great deal of rain for the 'last two days, which from your account appears to 'be much wanted in the North, and I hope will enable 'you to plant the evergreens. How does your garden 'look? particularly the American plants, the planting 'of which was one of our last occupations? I hope 'you will not scruple making any improvement you 'like. You do all you can to reconcile me to your 'solitude. I think I see you at your dinner, and the 'children at their supper with an appearance of com-'fort which makes me hope that you pass that hour at 'least in happiness. How I do wish that I had fol-

'lowed my own inclination, and that I had resigned 'my seat at the general election. The event has 'proved that I could do no good, and I might now 'have been with you. This train of thought makes 'me melancholy, and it is time to close my letter.'

His impatience to return to the North was now much increased by the appearance of scarlet fever in the neighbourhood of Howick. 'I got your letter,' he writes from the House of Commons, on the 16th, 'before I came down here, which has quite terrified 'me about the scarlet fever. Pray never neglect 'writing a single post whilst there is the slightest 'symptom of it remaining in the neighbourhood. I shall 'not know a moment's peace while it lasts . . .' Again, the following day: 'I have just got your letter, 'and am quite terrified at your account of this dread 'ful fever. I think you have done quite right in re- 'moving the children to Fallodon.* I am sure you 'need give yourself no concern about the trouble this 'may occasion. In the first place I know your society 'is a pleasure to them. In the next you must feel 'that they have an interest, inferior only to our own, 'in the safety of our lovely children. How this adds 'to my regret at being absent!' 'My anxiety for the 'post,' he says, a few days later, 'is now greater that 'yours can be. My day is passed in apprehension, 'till it is relieved by your letter to tell me that you 'are all in safety. I hope you left orders at Howick

* His father's place, six miles from Howick.

'that the poor people should have every assistance 'that can be given them in the way of wine, provisions, 'or anything necessary in their distress, from the 'house.'

The King's illness in February 1804 again took my father to town by himself. 'You will see,' he writes, after his arrival, and after a discussion on the subject in the House of Commons, in which he took part, 'that I only said a few words, and those 'few were as bad as anything that could have come 'from the Doctor* himself. I feel very much the 'want of habit and experience in debate, which is 'absolutely necessary to give that readiness without 'which nothing can be done, and which I unfortunately 'do not naturally possess. I feel every day more and 'more convinced of my unfitness for a pursuit which 'I detest,—which interferes with all my private com- 'fort,—and which I only sigh for an opportunity of 'abandoning decidedly and for ever. Do not think 'this is the language of momentary low spirits; it 'really is the settled conviction of my mind.'

He returned to the North early in March, and it was not without the greatest difficulty, and after repeated entreaties, that Mr. Fox persuaded him again to leave home towards the end of April, to take part in the attack, then in its full vigour, against Mr. Addington's Administration. 'Alone, unfriended, melan- 'choly, slow,' he writes, at the end of his second day's

* Mr. Addington's usual soubriquet.

journey; 'not very slow either, for I have come about 'one hundred miles to-day, but as melancholy as 'heart can be. I feel more than my usual pain at 'leaving you, and as I look forward to all the business 'in which I am going to engage, the less hope I feel 'that it can come to any good. I never felt less 'heart; the contest does not animate me, and I 'hardly wish for success.'

The fight was over, and Addington was out when he arrived. Then followed the discussions between the leaders of parties; the final arrangement of Mr. Pitt's second Administration; the delay in the public business occasioned by the re-election of the new Ministers;—all detaining my father necessarily in London, while his heart was at Howick with his family and his improvements. 'I wish,' he writes, on the 17th of May, 'that I could go to you without further 'delay, but I know you would not wish me to do so 'against my own conviction of what is right. It cer- 'tainly would have a bad appearance to leave town 'before any Parliamentary business comes on, and 'subject me to an imputation of coming from an ex- 'pectation of office. In this respect things have hap- 'pened very unluckily; first in the delay which the 're-election of the Ministers occasions, and next from 'the intervention of the Whitsuntide holidays at the 'beginning of next week.' . . . 'I hope your north- 'east wind has at last left you. We had it here about 'the time you wrote, but it is now as warm as ever

'Fox was at St. Anne's on Sunday and Monday, and 'he says he never saw so fine a spring; the lilacs 'and laburnums in full beauty, and the foliage of the 'trees uncommonly fine. This was confirmed by the 'appearance of the garden at Carlton House on Tues-'day, which was quite beautiful. How I do wish I 'was with you superintending our improvements! 'Why do you give way to Taylor?' (The gardener.) 'He is conceited and obstinate, and I think you may 'depend upon your taste corresponding better with 'my taste, than his. Have you saved the walnut-tree?'

Again, on the 24th, when the delay in the introduction of Mr. Pitt's measures was still prolonging his stay in London: 'Enough of politics,' he says. 'I 'am going to dine at Whitbread's, and shall pass the 'evening there if they do not go out, in which case my 'only resource will be Des-Haye's benefit. I never 'was less gaily inclined, but I cannot bear the gloomi-'ness of my own solitary room. It is not like a room 'one is settled in, and I generally pass as much of 'the day as I can in the streets. I am almost ashamed 'of this confession, for I do not see why I should not 'be able to occupy myself with a book or with busi-'ness. But my restlessness increases rather than 'diminishes by the length of my stay, and I can look 'to nothing but Howick for the means either of occu-'pation or comfort.'

Notwithstanding what he here says, no one, perhaps, ever possessed a greater power of occupying

himself at almost all times. Even those broken minutes, those odd quarters of an hour, which form, in the aggregate, so large a portion of all men's lives, were seldom thrown away by him. While waiting till others were ready to walk or ride, or on other similar occasions—even for such short moments—he could take up his book, and had the power of giving it at once his undivided attention. This power of concentrating his thoughts on whatever he was about, was, in him, very remarkable. He seldom took notes during a debate; yet, in reply, he rarely missed a point it was necessary to answer, and would take the arguments of his opponents in their order with an accuracy, and, I may add, a fairness, which has been rarely equalled, if, indeed, it has been ever attempted, by any other great Parliamentary debater. And this faculty, which he early acquired, he was wont to ascribe to Mr. Fox, who on one occasion, when he was yet young in Parliamentary life, stopped him as he was about to follow the example of others in leaving the House as some dull member rose to speak, and inculcated upon him the necessity, if he would himself succeed in debate, of patiently listening to all speakers, even the dull ones, as from the dullest he might derive ideas which he could afterwards turn to his own use.

To revert to the period of his stay in London during the months of May and June, 1804. His return home had been still farther delayed by the state of the King's health, which had led to a corre-

spondence between the Prince of Wales and the Lord Chancellor, and to the consideration whether some formal proceedings should not be taken by the Opposition in Parliament. The King's recovery from the threatened attack rendered this unnecessary; but it was not till the last week in June that my father was enabled to leave town for the North. 'The 'King's state,' he writes on the 7th June ('we have 'now got an admission under the hands of the physi- 'cians that his recovery is not perfect) is very embar- 'rassing. It is impossible for me to move till some 'determination is taken whether we shall act or not; 'but this suspense, I hope, will not, and, I think, 'cannot last very long. In the mean time it makes me 'perfectly miserable. The most unhappy time I ever 'spent has been the last month.' . . . And again, on the 9th, when a very strong division against Mr. Pitt in the House of Commons had led to the belief that he would not be able to stand, he adds: 'I cannot 'say that this gives me any particular pleasure, any 'further than as I think it will be advantageous to 'the country. But I dread the thoughts of being 'detained in town, and I have almost an equal fear 'of office. What I most wish for my own happiness, 'and what I still hope is, that I shall get away next 'week. The suspense quite kills me—the heat relaxes 'me—the uncertainty irritates me. I have no plea- 'sure and no interest in anything. I sleep badly— 'am restless all day, and more uncomfortable than I

'ever was in my life. Your description of the beau-
'ties of the country adds to my hatred of the town,
'and to my impatience to leave it. It is too hard
'that we should not enjoy this season together.'

The rest of the year 1804 was spent in comfort with his family at Howick—only interrupted by short visits to friends in the neighbourhood; but as the time approached for the opening of the Session of 1805, Mr. Fox grew more pressing for his early attendance, and made that appeal to my mother which I have already noticed, and which was successful in drawing him from his retirement. My mother, on this occasion, accompanied him to London, as she did again for the opening of the Session of 1806; and the change occurring at the beginning of the latter year, which gave the Whigs a short fourteen months' tenure of office, they were necessarily established in town for that period. There is consequently a longer cessation than usual of the daily letters which, during their occasional separations, contain such full and faithful accounts of public events, as well as so true and unaffected an expression of my father's opinions and feelings.

It was not till the close of the Session of 1807, during which he had resumed his seat on the Opposition bench, that they were enabled to return to Howick. In November of that year my grandfather died; and in January 1808 we find my father once more on the road by himself, on his way to take his

seat for the first time in the House of Lords; and once more writing from the inn where he passed the first night: 'I am quite well, but most unhappy at having 'left you. Yet I am very sanguine, nay, very confi-'dent, that my stay in the place that I hate most will 'be short. I see you all at this moment in the draw-'ing-room, and two of my sweet children at the 'pianoforte.' And again on the third night of his journey: 'We have had a most delightful day, which 'I hope has been equally fine at Howick. When the 'sun was shining, with a fine, mild air, I figured to 'myself you and my two sweet girls on the Heugh.' (A hill to the west of the house, round which there was a favourite gallop, and whence there was a magnificent view over the house and woods to the sea—taking in all the indentures of the coast, far to the north and south—with the ruined castles of Dunstanborough and Bamborough in the extreme distance on the one side, and Warkworth and Coquet Island, with its white lighthouse, on the other.*) 'I saw Ida going

At Coquet Isle their beads they tell
To the good saint who owned the cell;
Then did the Alne attention claim,
And Warkworth, proud of Percy's name;
And next they crossed themselves to hear
The whitening breakers' sound so near,
Where boiling through the rocks they roar
On Dunstanborough's caverned shore;
Thy tower, proud Bamborough, marked they there,
King Ida's castle, huge and square,
From its tall rock look grimly down,
And on the swelling ocean frown.

Marmion, canto ii.

[Dunstanborough,

'beautifully, and the light in the house, and the craig 'behind, with the calm, blue sea, were delightful to my 'imagination. Oh! that I could see them in reality!'

He was kept in London, partly by the business of the Session, and partly by the illness, ending in the death, of his uncle Sir Harry, till the beginning of April, when he returned to Howick.

My father's love for the country was second only to that for his home and family; and whenever he was in London by himself, he eagerly embraced every opportunity of spending a night or two in the comparative quiet and freshness of Holland House, or of passing a few days with Mr. Whitbread at Southill, or the Duke of Bedford at Woburn.

The charm and attractions of the society at Holland House, as it was then, are well known; and my father had, besides, the most sincere love and affection for Lord Holland, which I believe to have been as sincerely returned.* 'I came here yesterday,' he wrote from Holland House, in January 1808, 'as I told you was 'my intention, and, having been most kindly pressed

Dunstanborough, about three miles north of Howick, finely situated on a bold promontory, and containing seven acres within the walls, was a favourite lion of visitors at Howick—as was Warkworth, eight miles to the south, on the pretty river Coquet. Queen Margaret is said to have landed at Dunstanborough before the battle of Hexham.

* Lord Holland's lines on himself, found amongst his papers at his death, are well known:—

Nephew to Fox, and friend to Grey,
Enough my meed of fame—
If those who've deign'd to watch me, say
I've tarnished neither name!

'to do so, shall stay till to-morrow. . . . Independently 'of my liking to be here, or, indeed, anywhere rather 'than in London, the least breath of country air 'always makes me feel so much better than I do in 'London, that this alone would make it pleasant to 'me.' And the next day he repeats from the House of Lords: 'They have put off coming to town, and I 'am so much happier there; and sleeping out of town 'does me so much good, that I am going back with 'Holland.'

In May 1809 he writes from Woburn on his way back to Howick from another short absence of three weeks, to which he had submitted at the earnest request of his friends: 'Since I began this I have 'been taking a drive, and every time I come here I 'am more indignant at the fashionable injustice of 'calling this an ugly place. Some of the ground is 'beautiful. There are everywhere the finest trees, 'and an extent of flourishing young plantations that 'excite my envy. One part of the drive was through 'a beautiful wood, in which I do not exaggerate when 'I say that the lily of the valley is as thick as the wild 'hyacinths at Howick. I never saw the country in 'greater beauty. The laburnums are loaded with 'blossoms; and the richness of the verdure of the grass, 'and of the foliage of the trees, is very refreshing 'after the dirt of London.'

The care of his own plantations was always a favourite occupation with him, and one which he

thoroughly understood, and all planting and thinning till the very last years of his life were conducted under his own superintendence. I should in vain attempt to paint him, as he was in the midst of his wood-cutters! Suffice it to say that there never was a happier time, either for himself or his children, than that so spent.

In 1810, my father took a house in Portman Square; and from this time forward my mother and sisters accompanied him regularly each season to London. In January, however, of that year, he had been again there by himself to be present at the opening of the Session. 'I must confess,' he writes on the 24th, 'that you have had lately cause to complain of my 'letters. They have been very uncomfortable and 'very short. In truth I have found it difficult to 'write. The shoals of people that *will* come in 'whether I am refused at the door or not; the quan-'tity of papers I have had to read; the plague of 'settling our house; and, above all, the nervous agita-'tion which always precedes a debate, particularly the 'first debate of the season,—have altogether made it 'impossible for me to write more. When I say that 'I have been nervous about the debate, you have 'seen me too often in that state to require any further 'description of it. I think I hardly ever felt so much 'so, and I have been continually asking myself, how, 'without the slightest chance of doing any good, I can 'be such a fool as voluntarily to create to myself so

'much uneasiness. Thank God, however, my first 'effort is over, and, if I may believe my friends, was 'not entirely unsuccessful. I should say myself it 'was about the standard of my ordinary productions, 'which you know I am not disposed to admire to 'excess.'

But I need not follow in detail the various occasions on which, in successive years, my father was taken by himself to London in order to attend his Parliamentary duties; or reproduce more of the letters written by him during these separations. I have already, perhaps, quoted more than enough to show the nature and strength of his feelings when forced to leave home; and very few and short passages from his letters in 1819 shall be the last I will extract. In that year he had felt himself compelled to go alone to town, once more to offer his most strenuous opposition to the coercive policy with which Government met the disturbances in the country, which distress and other causes had occasioned. But his stay there was one of protracted vexation. He was at this time, and continued to be some years, subject to sudden attacks in the stomach—spasms of pain, producing violent sickness, for which weakening remedies were necessary. Dispirited by repeated attacks of this character, he felt acutely the lukewarmness and even disaffection of some of his friends, who could not be brought to face the majority arrayed against them, or who, really alarmed at the state of the country, were now disposed

to support the Ministerial measures; and the hopelessness of the contest in which he was engaged, increasing the disgust with which politics always inspired him, wrung from him repeated expressions of his wish to withdraw from them altogether. The day after his arrival in town he writes: 'In addition to my regret 'at leaving you, I have before me all the annoyances 'which the present state of politics must bring upon 'me. Oh! how I wish I was again at Howick!'

'I shall not have a happy moment,' he says in another letter, after recounting all the vexations and difficulties with which he had to contend, 'till I see 'the carriage at the door to take me back to Howick.' —Again: 'I sometimes almost resolve to discharge 'my mind of it, and to declare I cannot go through 'what is required of me. The truth is that I ought to 'have stayed quietly at Howick.'

'I have not shrunk, and I hope I shall not shrink,' he writes a few days later, 'from the performance of 'my duty. But there are times in which a man who 'feels that his efforts are useless may withdraw him-'self from a scene of unavailing contest, in which, 'without advantage to any individual, he risks his 'health, and sacrifices his family comfort.'

I shall have to recur to the events of 1819, and to the circumstances under which the letters, from which the above are extracts, were written, should I return, in another volume, to give some further account of my father's public life.

The year 1820 was one of repeated separations. My mother, with two of my sisters, went in the month of May to visit her mother at Bishop's Court near Dublin, —the first time she had been in Ireland since her marriage in 1794—and my father was called up to London no less than three times on account of the unfortunate proceedings against the Queen in the House of Lords. This business belongs also to a future chapter; and it is not necessary, after the many extracts I have already given from his letters written on other occasions of absence, to say more than that now also they were filled with the usual yearnings for his own fireside, and the comfortable evening readings with his family for his audience, and with lamentations over the 'sad manner in which this poor year has been cut 'up by various separations.'

In 1821 my mother had a dangerous illness, from which, in consequence of the severity of the treatment, her recovery was very slow; and in 1823 it was deemed essential that the winter should be spent in a milder climate than Northumberland. And this being made known to the Duke of Wellington, he kindly offered my father the use of Government-House at Devonport, which belonged to him as Governor of Plymouth.

The next three winters were spent there—indeed the greater part of each year—only interrupted by short visits of my father to London—and one journey by himself, in 1824, to the North. During this ab-

sence my grandmother died at Wentworth. 'I know 'it is impossible,' my father writes from the North, 'that you should not feel—deeply feel—the loss you 'have suffered. Your poor mother's amiable qualities, 'and the confidence and affection which made her 'more to you than a mother, can never recur to your 'mind without the most painful reflection on your 'being deprived of them in this world for ever. But 'they ought also to be a source of comfort and con-'solation, in the other reflection which as naturally 'accompanies them, that they were returned by you 'with more than the attachment and devotion of a 'child, and that you have not a reproach to make to 'yourself for any one act of your life with respect to 'her, and that under many severe distresses and dis-'appointments, she always found in your affection the 'means of comfort and happiness. I do hope, there-'fore, that with deep and bitter regrets, more com-'fortable feelings also attend the thoughts which 'necessarily turn to her.' . . . . 'I hope further that by 'degrees you will reconcile yourself to the inevitable 'conditions of our mortal existence, and that you will 'find in the duty which you owe to yourself and to 'those who have surviving claims upon you, the 'strength of mind which is necessary to the support 'of evils to which we must all submit . . . . And 'now I will dismiss this painful subject, not from any 'indifference to it, for I really loved her as a mother, 'but because I think it is a duty, of which I ought to

'set you the example, not to dwell on recollections 'which can be of no use to those who are the objects 'of them, and which cannot be indulged too much, 'without interfering with what we owe to others.'

In the spring of 1826 he bade a final adieu to Devonshire; and from that time until 1843, with the exception of the three years and a half he was in office, from November 1830 to July 1834, the accustomed life at Howick was resumed, broken only by the usual visits to London for two or three months in each season.

The events of these years will be matter for a future volume which, I trust, my brother will himself undertake, and which may contain a true history (still wanting, notwithstanding the many publications that have appeared professing to give an account of that period) of the Reform Administration. In that volume, any incidents, connected with my father's private life in these latter years, which may seem deserving of mention, may find their place. For the present I have said enough, and quoted enough of his correspondence with my mother, to prove the happiness of his domestic life, and the unwillingness with which he exchanged it, at any time, for the troubles and vexations of party politics. I need only further say that these feelings gained strength with his advancing years, as the two following extracts—one from a letter in 1824, when there was a general idea that a change of government was imminent, the other from his famous reply

on the debate for the second reading of the Reform Bill—will abundantly testify:—

'You talk of scolding! But what do you call what 'I have just received for not speaking? In the parti- 'cular instance it was most unjust. For in the state 'in which the debate ended . . . . I should not in the 'most active period of my life have thought it neces- 'sary to say one word. But really I cannot believe, 'when you consider the matter coolly, that you will 'think me really to blame for withdrawing from all 'active politics. I really am unequal to constant 'attendance and exertion even out of office. In office 'it would be quite impossible for me to support the 'fatigue and anxiety which must attend any leading 'situation in the Government. I am now past sixty. I 'have arrived at that age having been but one year in 'the ministry. I had not in that short period the means 'of acquiring official knowledge and experience . . . . 'Looking at all these circumstances, surely a scene is 'exhibited which may well excuse a person, long past 'the vigour of his life, for wishing to pass the remain- 'der of it in peace and retirement.'

'I had no desire,' he said on the second occasion to which I have alluded, 'for place, and it was not sought 'after by me. It was offered to me under such cir- 'cumstances that nothing but a sense of duty could 'have induced me to accept it . . . . I have lived a 'long life of exclusion from office—I had no official 'habits—I possessed not the advantages which those

'official habits confer. I am fond of retirement and 'domestic life, and I lived happy and contented in the 'bosom of my family. I was surrounded by those to 'whom I am attached by the warmest ties of affection: 'what then but a sense of duty could have induced 'me to plunge into all the difficulties, not unforeseen, 'of my present situation? what else in my declining 'age?—

"What else could tempt me on the stormy seas,
Bankrupt of life yet prodigal of ease!"

'I defy my worst enemy, if he has the most moderate 'sense of candour, to find ground for charging me 'with any other motive.'

In 1843 the long illness commenced which ended, after sufferings borne with the most exemplary patience and resignation, in my father's death on the 17th of July, 1845.

Leaving now the reader to form his own estimate of his character from the materials which I am aware I have most imperfectly put before him, I shall conclude this volume with an extract from a notice of his public life, supposed to have been written by one who had been brought up in the opposite camp,* and which, amid much that is fanciful and imaginary, shows, on the whole, a just appreciation of the high honour and consistency, the elevated and generous principles, and the pure and disinterested patriotism which marked my father's whole career.

* Ascribed, I know not how correctly, to the Hon. George Smythe, afterwards Lord Strangford.

'The old Whig traditions,' says this writer, 'were 'preserved by him pure and intact, sacred and com- 'plete. Their greatest modern illustrations were of his 'achievement. The abolition of the slave-trade in '1807, when he was Foreign Secretary; the abolition 'of slavery in 1834, when he was Prime Minister; 'their long and magnanimous exile from power, from '1806 down to 1830, for the sake of the emancipation 'of Ireland; the Reform Bill which he proposed in one 'century, and which he carried in another. Such were 'among the triumphs of his magnificent career. Rare 'trophies, and almost unexampled in one public life! '. . . . And these great deeds were memorably car- 'ried, not by artifice, nor machination, nor statecraft; 'not by the maxims of "the Prince," here bowing to 'the monarch, there bending to the people—here abat- 'ing a principle, there compromising a truth; but by 'a straightforward, open, and honest, public-hearted, 'English course of conduct.'

To this I may further add the following inscription written by the late Rev. Sydney Smith, for the statue erected to my father in Newcastle, but which, as Lady Holland* says in the Memoirs of her father, 'as it 'did not entirely meet the views of all the subscribers, 'was not adopted; though I have reason to believe 'it was much approved of by the family.'

* Daughter of the Rev. Sydney Smith, married to Sir Henry Holland, M.D.

To CHARLES EARL GREY, K.G.,
Of Howick, in Northumberland,
THIS MONUMENT,
In a spirit of solemn respect
And deep gratitude,
Is erected by many of his fellow-citizens.
They have seen him through a long life
Dedicating his fine talents to promote the best interests
Of Mankind,
And, in evil days, with high moral courage,
Defending the almost extinguished Liberties of England.
They owe to him that memorable Reform,
Which, blending Freedom with Loyalty and Order,
Has infused fresh life and energy into all
Our Institutions;
A Reform which he planned in his youth,
And brought to triumphant perfection in his advanced age.
Remembering these things,
They have deemed it an act of sacred justice
To record, by a Public Monument,
Their admiration of this great Statesman:
Not without hope
That the young, seeing what those qualities are
Which command the gratitude of mankind,
May strive to be as good and pure as he
Whose image is here placed before their eyes.

APPENDIX.

I.

Letter from Mr. Perceval to Lord Grey, and Lord Grey's Answer.

'My Lord, 'Windsor, September 23, 1809.

'The Duke of Portland having signified to His 'Majesty, his intention of retiring from His Majesty's 'service, in consequence of the state of his Grace's 'health, His Majesty has authorised Lord Liverpool, 'in conjunction with myself, to communicate with your 'Lordship and Lord Grenville, for the purpose of form-'ing an extended and combined Administration.

'I hope, therefore, that your Lordship, in consequence 'of this communication, will come to town in order 'that as little time as possible may be lost in for-'warding this important object; and that you will 'have the goodness to inform me of your arrival.

'I am also to acquaint your Lordship that I have 'received His Majesty's commands to make a similar 'communication to Lord Grenville of His Majesty's 'pleasure.

'I think it right to add, for your Lordship's infor-

'mation, that Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning have 'intimated their intention to resign their offices.

'I have, &c.,

(Signed) 'SPENCER PERCEVAL.'

Lord Grey to Mr. Perceval.

'SIR, 'Howick, September 25, 1809.

'I have this evening had the honour of re- 'ceiving your letter of the 23rd, informing me that 'in consequence of the Duke of Portland's intention of 'retiring from His Majesty's service, His Majesty had 'authorised you, in conjunction with Lord Liverpool, to 'communicate with Lord Grenville and myself, for the 'purpose of forming an extended and combined Ad- 'ministration, and expressing a hope that, in conse- 'quence of this communication, I would go to London, 'that as little time as possible might be lost in for- 'warding this important object.

'Had His Majesty been pleased to signify that he 'had any commands for me personally, I should not 'have lost a moment in showing my duty and obedi- 'ence, by a prompt attendance on his Royal Pleasure.

'But when it is proposed to me to communicate 'with His Majesty's present Ministers for the purpose 'of forming a combined Administration with them, I 'feel I should be wanting both in duty to His Majesty, 'and in fairness to them, if I did not frankly and at 'once declare, that such an union is, with respect to 'me, under the present circumstances, impossible.

'This being the answer which I find myself under 'the necessity of giving, my appearance in London 'could be of no advantage, and might, at a moment 'like the present, be attended with some inconvenience.

'I have thought it better therefore to request that 'you will have the goodness to lay my duty at the 'feet of His Majesty, humbly entreating him not to 'attribute to any want of attachment to his Royal 'Person, or to a diminished zeal for his service, my 'declining a communication which, upon the terms 'proposed, could lead to no useful result, but might 'be of serious detriment to the country, if, in conse- 'quence of a less decisive answer from me, any further 'delay should take place in the formation of a settled 'Government.

'I have, &c.,

(Signed) 'GREY.'

II.

ANSWER OF THE PRINCE TO THE TWO HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT ON ASSUMING THE REGENCY, JAN. 1811.

Draft of Answer proposed by Lord Grey.

'MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

'I receive the resolutions communicated to me 'on the part of the two Houses, with all the considera-

'tion due to their high authority, and with those 'feelings which an occasion so deeply interesting to 'me must necessarily inspire.

'A sense of the duty which I owe to my King and 'Father, and to my country, will not allow me to 'decline the arduous charge thus offered to my 'acceptance. But I cannot be insensible in this 'season of great and increasing difficulty, to the 'possible practical inconvenience, and to the danger- 'ous principle of the limitations annexed to it, how- 'ever short their duration.

'The two Houses cannot be more anxious than I am 'to make all necessary provisions for His Majesty's 'present comfort, and for the future exercise of His 'Royal Functions, whenever, by the blessing of God, 'he shall be enabled to resume them. Proportioned 'to the pain I now feel, will be the happiness of that 'day when I shall be called upon to restore to the 'King those Powers, which, as belonging only to him, 'are in his name, and on his behalf, now to be entrusted 'to me. It will be, in the mean time, my earnest and 'unremitting endeavour to administer them in such a 'manner as may be most conducive to the honour of 'His Majesty's Crown, and as may best accord with 'the general spirit and principles of our free con- 'stitution.

'With this object nearest to my heart, I shall 'anxiously study, at all times, to conciliate the aid 'and assistance of the two Houses of Parliament, and

'the support of a generous and loyal people; con-
'scious that on these my hopes of a successful Ad-
'ministration must, under the Divine Providence,
'chiefly depend.'

Draft of Answer proposed by Lord Grenville and Lord Grey, and rejected by the Prince.

'My Lords and Gentlemen,

'Under the heavy affliction which has fallen
'upon us, I can have no greater consolation than in the
'testimonies of your regard and favourable opinion.
'These are my best encouragement, and their continu-
'ance must be my chief support in the unexampled
'difficulties of the task on which I am about to enter.

'With respect to the proposed limitations of the
'authority to be intrusted to me, I retain my former
'opinions. The two Houses cannot be more anxious
'than I am to make all necessary provisions for the
'present comfort of His Majesty, and for the future
'exercise of his royal functions, whenever, by the
'blessing of God, he shall be enabled to resume them.
'Proportioned to the pain which I now experience,
'will be the happiness of that day when I may restore
'to him those powers which, as belonging only to him,
'are, in his name and on his behalf, to be intrusted
'to me.

'For such a purpose no restraint can be necessary
'to be imposed on me.

'To the arrangements, however, which your wisdom 'shall ultimately deem best suited to such an occasion 'I shall readily accede; conscious that whatever 'degree of confidence you may think fit to repose in 'me, it will at least be justified by the integrity of 'my views, by my attachment to your welfare, in 'which my own is inseparably involved, and by my 'unceasing solicitude for the discharge of all the 'various duties which I owe to my Father and to my 'Sovereign.

'For myself I can desire nothing more than that I 'may, with your assistance, uphold the glory, and the 'essential interests of his Crown; that he may resume 'the government unimpaired and undiminished when-'ever it shall please Providence to restore him to our 'prayers; and that he may then have the satisfaction 'to learn that the conduct of his son, in this perilous 'crisis of our affairs, has been such as was best cal-'culated to promote the objects nearest to his heart— 'the safety and happiness of his affectionate and faith-'ful people.'

Draft of Answer prepared by Mr. Sheridan as adopted by the Prince.

'My Lords and Gentlemen,

'I receive the communication which the two 'Houses have directed you to make to me of their 'joint Resolutions on the subject of "providing for the

'royal authority during the continuance of His Ma-
'jesty's illness," with those sentiments which I am
'bound to feel for the united desires of the two Houses.

'With the same sentiments I receive the expressed
'hopes of the Lords and Commons, that, from my
'regard for the interest of His Majesty and the nation,
'I should be ready to undertake the weighty and im-
'portant trust, proposed to be invested in me, under
'the restrictions and limitations stated in those reso-
'lutions. Conscious that every sentiment of my heart
'would have prompted me from dutiful affection to my
'beloved Father and Sovereign to have shown all the
'reverential delicacy inculcated in those Resolutions,
'I cannot refrain from expressing some degree of
'regret, and no less of mortification, that I should be
'stript of the opportunity of manifesting to his loyal
'and afflicted subjects that such would have been my
'conduct.

'Deeply impressed, however, with the necessity of
'tranquillizing the public mind, and determined to
'submit to every personal sacrifice consistent with the
'regard I owe to the security of my father's Crown,
'and the equal regard I owe to the welfare of the
'people, I do not hesitate to accept the office and
'situation proposed to me, restricted as they are—still
'retaining every opinion expressed by me upon a
'former and similar distressing occasion.

'In undertaking the trust proposed to me, I am
'well aware of the difficulties of the situation in which

'I shall be placed, but I shall rely with confidence 'upon the constitutional advice of an enlightened Par- 'liament, and the zealous support of a generous and 'loyal people. I will use all the means left to me to 'merit both.

'My Lords and Gentlemen,

'You will communicate this my answer to the 'two Houses, accompanied by my most fervent wishes 'and prayers that the Divine will may extricate us 'and the nation from the grievous embarrassments of 'our present condition, by the speedy restoration of 'His Majesty's health.'

Representation sent by Lords Grey and Grenville to the Prince of Wales.

'January 11, 1811.'

'The circumstances which have occurred respecting 'your Royal Highness's answer to the two Houses, 'have induced Lord Grey and Lord Grenville most 'humbly to solicit permission to submit to your Royal 'Highness the following considerations, with the un- 'disguised sincerity which the occasion seems to re- 'quire, but with every expression that can best convey 'their respectful feelings of dutiful and inviolable 'attachment.

'When your Royal Highness did Lord Grenville the 'honour, through Mr. Adam, to command his attend-

'ance, it was distinctly expressed to him that your 'Royal Highness had condescended to select him, in 'conjunction with Lord Grey, to be consulted with as 'the public and responsible advisers of that answer; 'and Lord Grenville can never forget the gracious 'manner in which your Royal Highness had the good-'ness to lay these your orders upon him. It was also 'on the same ground of public and responsible ad-'vice, that Lord Grey, honoured in like manner by the 'most gracious expression of your Royal Highness's 'confidence on this subject, applied himself to the con-'sideration of it, conjointly with Lord Grenville. 'They could not but feel the difficulty of the under-'taking which required them to reconcile two objects 'essentially different, to uphold and distinctly to mani-'fest that unshaken adherence to your Royal High-'ness's past and present opinions, which consistency 'and honour require; but to conciliate at the same 'time, the feelings of the two Houses by expressions 'of confidence and affection, and to lay the foundation 'of that good understanding between your Royal 'Highness and the Parliament, the establishment of 'which must be the first wish of every man who is 'truly attached to your Royal Highness, and who 'knows and values the constitution of his country.

'Lord Grey and Lord Grenville are far from the 'presumption of believing that their humble endea-'vours for the execution of so difficult a task, might 'not be susceptible of many and great amendments.

'The draft which they humbly submitted to your 'Royal Highness, was considered by them as open to 'every remark which might occur to your Royal 'Highness's better judgment. On every occasion, 'but more especially in the preparation of your Royal 'Highness's first act of Government, it would have 'been no less their desire than their duty to have 'profited by all such objections, and to have laboured 'to accomplish, in the best manner they were able, 'every command which your Royal Highness might 'have been pleased to lay upon them. Upon the 'objects to be attained, there could be no difference of 'sentiment. These, such as they have above de-'scribed, are, they confidently believe, not less impor-'tant in your Royal Highness's view of the subject, 'than in that which they themselves have ventured 'to express.

'But they would be wanting in that sincerity and 'openness by which they can alone hope, however 'imperfectly, to make any return to that gracious con-'fidence with which your Royal Highness condescend-'ed to honour them, if they suppressed the expression 'of their deep concern, in finding that their humble 'endeavours in your Royal Highness's service have 'been submitted to the judgment of another person, by 'whose advice your Royal Highness has been guided 'in your final decision on a matter, in which they alone 'had, however unworthily, been honoured with your 'Royal Highness's commands.

'It is their most sincere and ardent wish that in 'the arduous state in which your Royal Highness is 'about to fill, you may have the benefit of the public 'advice and responsible services of those men, who-'ever they may be, by whom your Royal Highness's 'glory, and the interests of the country can best be 'promoted. It would be with unfeigned distrust of 'their own means of discharging such duties, that they 'could, in any case, venture to undertake them. And 'in the humble but respectful representation which 'they have presumed to make of their feelings on this 'occasion, they are conscious of being actuated no less 'by their dutiful and grateful attachment to your 'Royal Highness, than by those principles of constitu-'tional responsibility, the maintenance of which they 'deem essential to any hope of a successful adminis-'tration of the public interests.

(Signed) 'GREY,
'GRENVILLE.'

Copy of Letter from Lord Lauderdale to Lord Grey.

'January 11, 1811.
'Friday, 1 o'clock A.M.

'DEAR GREY,

'When I returned into the room I found Lady 'Holland; Harrison and Allen had retired, and Adam 'and Sheridan were engaged reading the two answers 'to Holland.

'Holland disapproved of Sheridan's, as showing 'throughout an unbecoming soreness at the restrictions,

'and as worded in some parts in a very undignified 'manner. Of the other he said, that if the Prince had 'objections to any part of it, what he ought to have 'done was, to have sent for you and Grenville, to whom 'those objections ought to have been submitted; ex- 'pressing himself very strongly upon the impropriety 'of substituting another answer, after having desired 'the advice of Lord Grenville and you concerning the 'answer he was to give. I think the answer you sent 'not so good as that you read to me in the morning,' (see first drafts given above), 'and there is a passage 'at the beginning of it which is really objectionable. 'But that is a totally separate consideration.

'The impropriety of the whole transaction was for- 'cibly stated to Sheridan, and he was distinctly told 'by Holland that the Prince must be considered as 'withdrawing his confidence from Lord Grenville and 'you, if he adopted an answer suggested by another, 'and rejected that which had been drawn up at his own 'request. At the same time the obvious course was 'pointed out to him; that if he disapproved of any 'part of what had been submitted to him, he ought to 'have sent for Grenville and you to learn his objec- 'tions, and afterwards to draw out such an amended 'answer, as, consistent with your opinions, you could 'advise His Royal Highness to make.

'Sheridan muttered something about his thinking 'that the Prince was not yet in a situation to have a 'responsible adviser, which was flatly contradicted,

'and he was told that such certainly was not the 'opinion of the Prince, who had employed you and 'Lord Grenville to draw it out, after explanation of 'his intention to confide in you. Adam and he must 'have returned to Carlton House with the impression 'that Holland thought the Prince had only one line 'which with propriety he could pursue—that is, to 'send for Grenville and you in the morning, and 'submit the whole to your joint consideration.

'You will see that I could do nothing to prevent 'this discussion, for they were actually engaged in 'reading one of the answers when I returned.

'Yours,

(Signed) 'L——.

III.

Proposal made by the Prince Regent to Lords Grey and Grenville through the Duke of York at the expiration of the year of restrictions.

The Prince Regent to the Duke of York.

'My dearest Frederick,

'As the restrictions on the exercise of the 'royal authority will shortly expire, when I must 'make my arrangements for the future Administration 'of the powers with which I am invested, I think it 'right to communicate to you those sentiments which 'I was withheld from expressing at an earlier period 'of the Session, by my earnest desire that the ex-

'pected motion on the affairs of Ireland might undergo 'the deliberate discussion of Parliament, unmixed 'with any other consideration.

'I think it hardly necessary to call your recollection 'to the recent circumstances under which I assumed 'the authority delegated to me by Parliament. At a 'moment of unexampled difficulty and danger I was 'called upon to make a selection of persons to whom I 'should intrust the functions of executive Govern-'ment. My sense of duty to our royal father solely 'decided that choice, and every private feeling gave 'way to considerations which admitted of no doubt or 'hesitation. I trust I acted in that respect as the 'genuine representative of the august person whose 'functions I was appointed to discharge; and I have 'the satisfaction of knowing that such was the opinion 'of persons for whose judgment and honourable prin-'ciples I entertain the highest respect. In various 'instances, as you well know, where the law of the 'last Session left me at full liberty, I have waived 'my personal gratification in order that His Majesty 'might resume, on his restoration to health, every 'power and prerogative belonging to his Crown. I 'certainly am the last person in the kingdom who can 'be permitted to despair of our royal father's recovery.

'A new era is now arrived, and I cannot but reflect 'with satisfaction on the events which have distin-'guished the short period of my restricted Regency. 'Instead of suffering the loss of any of her possessions 'by the gigantic force which has been employed

'against them, Great Britain has added most im-
'portant acquisitions to her empire. The national
'faith has been preserved inviolate towards our allies;
'and, if character is strength as applied to a nation,
'the increased and increasing reputation of His
'Majesty's arms will show to the nations of the Con-
'tinent how much they may still achieve when ani-
'mated by a glorious spirit of resistance to a foreign
'yoke. In the critical situation of the war in the
'Peninsula, I shall be most anxious to avoid any
'measure which can lead my allies to suppose that I
'mean to depart from the present system. Persever-
'ance alone can achieve the great object in question;
'and I cannot withhold my approbation from those
'who have honourably distinguished themselves in
'support of it. I have no predilections to indulge;
'no resentments to gratify; no objects to attain but
'such as are common to the whole empire. If such is
'the leading principle of my conduct, and I can appeal
'to the past in evidence of what the future will be, I
'flatter myself I shall meet with the support of Par-
'liament and a candid and enlightened nation.

'Having made this communication of my sentiments
'in this new and extraordinary crisis of our affairs, I
'cannot conclude without expressing the gratification
'I should feel if some of those persons with whom the
'early habits of my life were formed, would strengthen
'my hands and constitute a part of my Government.
'With such support, and aided by a united and vigo-

rous Administration, formed on the most liberal 'basis, I shall look with additional confidence to a 'prosperous issue of the most arduous contest in which 'Great Britain was ever engaged.

'You are authorized to communicate these senti-'ments to Lord Grey, who, I have no doubt, will 'make them known to Lord Grenville.

'I am always, my dearest Frederick,

'Your ever affectionate brother,

(Signed) 'GEORGE, P. R.'

'Carlton House,
'February 13, 1812.

'P.S.—I shall send a copy of this letter immediately to Mr. Perceval.'

Lords Grey and Grenville to the Duke of York.

'SIR, 'February 15, 1812.

'WE beg most humbly to express to your 'Royal Highness our dutiful acknowledgments for the 'gracious and condescending manner in which you 'have had the goodness to communicate to us the 'letter of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent, on 'the subject of the arrangements to be now made for 'the future Administration of the public affairs. And 'we take the liberty of availing ourselves of your 'gracious permission to address to your Royal High-'ness, in this form, what has occurred to us in con-'sequence of that communication.

'The Prince Regent, after expressing to your Royal 'Highness, in that letter, his sentiments on various 'public matters, has, in the concluding paragraph, 'condescended to intimate his wish "that some of 'those persons with whom the early habits of his life 'were formed, would strengthen His Royal High-'ness's hands, and constitute a part of his Govern-'ment." And His Royal Highness is pleased to add, '"that with such support, aided by a vigorous and 'united Administration, formed on the most liberal 'basis, he would look with additional confidence to 'the prosperous issue of the most arduous contest in 'which Great Britain was ever engaged."

'On the other parts of His Royal Highness's letter 'we do not presume to offer any observations. But 'on the concluding paragraph, in so far as we may 'venture to suppose ourselves included in the gracious 'wish which it expresses, we owe it, in obedience and 'duty to your Royal Highness, to explain ourselves 'with frankness and sincerity.

'We beg leave most earnestly to assure your Royal 'Highness that no sacrifices, except those of honour 'and duty, could appear to us too great to be made 'for the purpose of healing the divisions of our country, 'and of uniting both its Government and its people. 'All personal exclusions we entirely disclaim. We 'rest on public measures; and it is on this ground 'alone that we must express, without reserve, the im-'possibility of our uniting with the present Govern-

'ment. Our differences of opinion are too many and 'too important to admit of such a union. His Royal 'Highness will, we are confident, do us the justice to 'remember that we have twice already acted on this 'impression; in 1809, on the proposition made to us 'under His Majesty's authority; and last year when 'His Royal Highness was graciously pleased to require 'our advice respecting the formation of a new Govern-'ment. The reasons which we then humbly submitted 'to him are strengthened by the increasing dangers of 'the times; nor has there, down to this moment, 'appeared even any approximation towards such an 'agreement of opinion on the public interests, as can 'alone form a basis for the honourable union of parties 'previously opposed to each other.

'Into the detail of these differences we are unwilling 'to enter. They embrace almost all the leading 'features of the present policy of the empire. But 'His Royal Highness has himself been pleased to 'advert to the late deliberations of Parliament on the 'affairs of Ireland. This is a subject, above all others, 'important in itself, and connected with the most 'pressing dangers. Far from concurring in the senti-'ments which His Majesty's Ministers have on that 'occasion so recently expressed, we entertain opinions 'directly opposite. We are firmly persuaded of the 'necessity of a total change in the present system of 'Government in that country, and of the immediate 'repeal of those civil disabilities under which so large

'a portion of His Majesty's subjects still labour on 'account of their religious opinions. To recommend 'to Parliament this repeal is the first advice which it 'would be our duty to offer to His Royal Highness. 'Nor could we, even for the shortest time, make 'ourselves responsible for any further delay in the 'proposal of a measure without which we could enter- 'tain no hope of rendering our services useful to His 'Royal Highness or to our country.

'We have only, therefore, further to beg your Royal 'Highness to lay before the Prince Regent the ex- 'pressions of our humble duty, and the sincere and 'respectful assurance of our earnest wishes for what- 'ever may best promote the ease, honour, and ad- 'vantage of His Royal Highness's Government, 'and the success of his endeavours for the public 'welfare.

'We have the honour, &c.

(Signed) 'GREY.

'GRENVILLE.

'His Royal Highness the Duke of York, K.G. &c. &c.'

Copy of 'Minutes of a Conversation which took 'place between His Royal Highness the Duke of 'York, and Lords Grenville and Grey, on the 15th of 'February, 1812, drawn up by His Royal Highness, 'with the corrections of Lords Grenville and Grey in 'red ink.' (Thus endorsed by my father.) The paper

when sent by the Duke of York for correction was accompanied by the following note from Mr. Adam:—

'My dear Lord Grey,

'I send you a fair copy of the Duke of York's 'account of the conversation, with your amendments 'inserted in red ink,* to all which His Royal Highness 'accedes, subject to some observations inserted in 'common ink. The Duke of York expressed much 'gratification at the manner in which your Lordship 'expresses Lord Grenville's sentiments and your own, 'regarding His Royal Highness.

'Your Lordship's ever most faithfully,

(Signed) 'William Adam.'

Minutes of my Conversation with Lords Grey and Grenville, 15th Feb., 1812.

Lord Grenville began by stating to me, that he and Lord Grey had thought it most advisable to put their sentiments upon the Prince Regent's letter to me in writing (of which he delivered to me two copies, as well as returned me the letter itself), and was sorry to acquaint me, that, after the most mature deliberation ,they were under

* The red ink amendments of the original MS. are inserted in small type in the margin.

the necessity of declining *to enter into the proposed negotiation*; to which I replied, that I lamented most sincerely this communication, but begged leave to read the answer through, and to state anything that might strike me as wanting explanation in it.

The proposal that had been made to them;

Having read it, after a short pause, *Lord Grey began by saying* that they disclaimed all personal exclusions, but that it was quite impossible for them to unite with the present Government. And upon my expressing my surprise at this notion of the proposal, and asking an explanation, Lord Grey answered that it was collected from the *expression in the Prince's letter of his wish that some of those* persons with whom the early habits of his public life were formed, would strengthen his hands, and which

both Lord Grenville and Lord Grey said,

political unions could not be honourable where there was not an agreement on public measures, and that on this ground

whole tenor and construction of the Prince's letter which consisted of a communication of His Royal Highness's sentiments on the advantage resulting from the system pursued by the present Government, and concluded, after having made this communication, by expressing the gratification the Prince would feel if some of the

they understood to mean a junction with the present Administration. To which I replied, that this was by no means the Prince's intention. That his idea was to form an Administration upon a broad basis, by a union of different parties, of which he should consider himself the keystone and as a centre round which their Lordships and others might rally; and that this was one of the reasons for which he had chosen to employ me upon this overture, as it had generally been considered as a piece of political etiquette that the person who was employed in such negotiations was considered to be at the head of the new Administration, whereas that could never be the case in my instance.

therefore they could only understand

In this part of the conversation the Duke of York mentioned the difference in this respect between this proposal and that of 1809, which had been made through Mr. Perceval; to which Lord Grenville answered, that, in that respect, there was a total difference, and that nothing

could be more honourable to Lord Grey and himself than the Duke of York being the channel of the present communication, but that this circumstance, flattering as it was to them, could not vary their answer to the terms of the letter.

And upon Lord Grey's saying that this *expression had not been understood till his explanation*, I proposed, as this might make a difference in their sentiments, that they should reconsider their paper.

explanation could not be collected from the letter itself by anybody who read it,

Lord Grey seemed at first to hesitate, but soon answered that it would probably occasion an alteration only of an expression without making any change in the general sentiments of the paper; and that as this was the impression they derived from the letter till explained by me, the answer ought not to be altered.

To this Lord Grey said that what they were required to consider, was a written statement of the Prince's sentiments, that to this an answer could only be made in writing, and that they could not, under a verbal explanation, answer a written statement, affixing to it a sense which it obviously would not bear; that, undoubtedly, if the proposal to them had been to form an Administration, comprehending as large a description of persons as could be brought to agree with them in their

views of the public interests, a different answer would have been given, and that if in their present answer they should appear to the Prince to have misunderstood his meaning, the mistake might be corrected.

To this correction the Duke of York added the following remark, 'I do 'not exactly recollect 'this passage, but I re- 'member something like 'it. However, my view 'of this part of the sub- 'ject had been already 'given by me, viz. that 'it was inconsistent with 'my being the person 'to make the overture, 'which was to avoid the 'proposal assuming the 'shape of coming from 'either party, but as 'being the Prince's pro- 'posal, of which he con- 'sidered himself to be 'the centre.'

Lord Grey then slightly touched upon the question in the Prince's paper, of his approbation of the management of the political concerns of the nation, but entered warmly into his and his friends' feelings on the subject of Catholic

Emancipation, and hinted at the Prince's former opinions upon that head in the years 1803 and 1804; to which I answered that I was not informed of them, but asked if their Lordships had not been acquainted with the Prince's sentiments on that head in the years 1806 and 1807, which still continued the same, and his wish to prevent the question being brought forward. To which they answered, that they had equally wished to keep it back then; that it had been brought forward at that time against their wills, *and that it was likewise so this year.*

Lord Grey certainly did not say that it had been his wish to keep it back this year, which would have been contrary to the fact. His statement was, that he had endeavoured to prevent its being forced into discussion in 1807, but that the danger was now so great and so much increased in Lord Grey's apprehension, by the probable effect of the disappointment which would follow, if the claims of the Catholics were not acceded to by the Government of the

Prince Regent, that he could not take upon himself the responsibility of the shortest delay.

I then asked if this was the only impediment to forming a combined Administration; when both Lord Grey and Lord Grenville said that they differed with the present Administration upon almost every political subject, many of them of the highest importance, and only secondary to the Catholic Question, so that they saw no hope or possibility of any favourable termination to a negotiation. A It then only remained for me to express that I should carry the answer with a heavy heart to the Prince, who, I was sure, would lament it equally with myself.

A for an union with them.

IV.

Lord Wellesley's Second Negotiation for the Formation of a Government.

Minute of a Communication made by Lord Wellesley to Lord Grey, at Lord Grey's house.

June 1, 1812.

Lord Wellesley stated that he had on that morning received full authority from the Prince Regent, to

form an Administration under his Royal Highness's commands; and that he was specially authorised to communicate with Lords Grey and Grenville on the subject.

That his Royal Highness entertained no wish to exclude from the proposed Administration any person, or description of persons, who could unite in the principles on which the Administration was to be founded.

That the two propositions stated in Lord Wellesley's Minute of the 23rd of May (and subsequently explained by the letters which passed between Lord Wellesley and Lord Grey of the dates of the 27th, 28th, and 29th of May 1812) were intended by his Royal Highness to constitute the foundation of this Administration.

That his Royal Highness had signified his pleasure that Lord Wellesley should conduct the formation of the Administration, in all its branches; and should be First Commissioner of the Treasury; and that Lord Moira, Lord Erskine, and Mr. Canning, should be members of the Cabinet.

That it was probable that a Cabinet formed on an enlarged basis must be extended to the number of twelve or thirteen members; that the Prince wished Lords Grey and Grenville, on the part of their friends, to recommend for his Royal Highness's approbation the names of four persons (if the Cabinet should consist of twelve), and of five persons (if it should consist of thirteen), to be appointed by his Royal Highness to fill such stations in his Councils as might hereafter be arranged.

That His Royal Highness left the selection of the names to Lords Grey and Grenville, without any exception or personal exclusion.

That in completing the new arrangement, the Prince Regent has granted to Lord Wellesley entire liberty to propose, for his Royal Highness's approbation, the names of any persons now occupying stations in his Royal Highness's Councils, or of any other persons: that if the proposition made to Lords Grey and Grenville should be accepted as the outline of an arrangement, all other matters would be discussed with the most anxious solicitude to promote harmony and general accommodation.

(Signed) WELLESLEY.

Answer of Lords Grey and Grenville.

'Camelford House, June 3, 1812.

'MY LORD,

'WE have considered with the most serious 'attention the Minute which we have had the honour 'to receive, and have communicated it to such of our 'friends as we have had the opportunity of consulting. 'On the occasion of a proposal made to us under the 'authority of the Prince Regent, we wish to renew, in 'the most solemn manner, the declaration of our un- 'feigned desire to have facilitated, as far as was in our 'power, the means of giving effect to the late vote of 'the House of Commons, and of averting the imminent

'and unparalleled dangers of the country. No sense 'of the public distress and difficulty, no personal feel- 'ings of whatever description would have prevented us, 'under such circumstances, from accepting with dutiful 'submission, any situations in which we could have 'hoped to serve His Royal Highness usefully and 'honourably.

'But it appears to us, on the most dispassionate 'reflection, that the proposal stated to us by your 'Lordship, cannot justify any such expectation. We 'are invited, not to discuss with your Lordship, or with 'any other public men, according to the usual practice 'in such cases, the various and important considera- 'tions both of measures and arrangements which belong 'to the formation of a new Government in all its 'branches; but to recommend to His Royal Highness 'a number, limited by previous stipulation, of persons 'willing to be included in a Cabinet, of which the out- 'lines are already definitively arranged.

'To this proposal we could not accede without the 'sacrifice of that very principle which the House of 'Commons has recommended—the formation of a strong 'and efficient Government. We enter not into the 'examination of the relative proportions, or of the 'particular arrangements, which it has been judged 'necessary thus previously to establish. It is to the 'principle of disunion and jealousy that we object. To 'the supposed balance of contending interests in a 'Cabinet so measured out by preliminary stipulations.

'The times imperiously require an Administration 'united in principle, and strong in mutual reliance— 'possessing also the confidence of the Crown, and 'assured of its support in those healing measures which 'the public safety requires, and which are necessary to 'secure to the Government the opinion and affections 'of the people. No such hope is presented to us by 'this project, which appears to us equally new in 'practice, and objectionable in principle. It tends, as 'we think, to establish within the Cabinet itself, a 'system of counteraction, inconsistent with the prose- 'cution of any uniform and beneficial course of policy. 'We must therefore request permission to decline all 'participation in a Government constituted on such 'principles: satisfied as we are, that the certain loss 'of character to ourselves, would be productive only 'of disunion and weakness in the administration of the 'public interests.

(Signed) 'GRENVILLE.
'GREY.'

V.

Minute of a Conversation between Lord Moira and Lords Grey and Grenville, at which Lord Erskine was present.

St. James's Place, June 6, 1812.

Lord Moira stated to Lords Grey and Grenville that he was authorized by the Prince Regent to

consult with them on the formation of a new Government; and satisfactory explanations having taken place between them respecting such measures as appeared to be of the greatest urgency at the present moment, more especially with reference to the situation of His Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects, and the differences now unhappily subsisting with America; and that Lord Moira had received this commission without any restriction or limitation whatever being laid by the Prince on their considering any point which they judged useful for his service;—they expressed their satisfaction with the fairness of this proposal, and their readiness to enter into such discussions as must precede the details of any new arrangement.

As a preliminary question, which appeared to them of great importance, and which they thought it necessary immediately to bring forward to prevent the inconvenience and embarrassment of the further delay which might be produced if this negotiation should break off in a more advanced state, they asked whether this full liberty extended to the consideration of new appointments to those great offices of the Household, which have been usually included in the political arrangements made on a change of Administration, intimating their opinion that it would be necessary to act on the same principle on the present occasion. Lord Moira answered that the Prince had laid no restriction upon him in that respect, and had

never pointed, in the most distant manner, at the protection of those officers from removal. That it would, however, be impossible for him (Lord Moira) to concur in making the exercise of this power positive and indispensable in the formation of the Administration, because he should deem it, on public grounds, peculiarly objectionable. To this Lords Grey and Grenville replied, they also acted on public grounds alone, and with no other feeling whatever than that which arose from the necessity of giving to a new Government that character of efficiency and stability, and those marks of the constitutional support of the Crown, which were required to enable it to act usefully for the public service; and that on those grounds it appeared to them indispensable, that the connection of the great offices of the Court with the political Administration should be clearly established in its first arrangements.

A decided difference of opinion as to this point having been thus expressed on both sides, the conversation ended here with mutual declarations of regret. Nothing was said on the subject of official arrangements, nor any persons proposed on either side to fill any particular situations.

THE END.

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